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MY LIFE WORK

OFFICE AND STORE OCCUPATIONS

McGRAW-HILL VOCATIONAL TEXTS

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MY LIFE WORK

OFFICE AND STORE OCCUPATIONS

BY

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First Edition
Fourth Impression

McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, Inc.
NEW YORK AND LONDON

371.42

Copyright, 1930, by the
McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE MAPLE PRESS COMPANY, YORK, PA.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION vii

PART I

OFFICE OCCUPATIONS

CHAPTER

I. THE OFFICE BOY 3

II. THE SECRETARIAL WORKER 17

III. THE CLERICAL WORKER 31

IV. THE ACCOUNTING OCCUPATIONS 51

V. THE OFFICE MACHINE OPERATOR 65

PART II

STORE OCCUPATIONS

VI. THE RETAIL GROCER 79

VII. THE RETAIL MEAT DEALER 103

VIII. THE DEPARTMENT-STORE WORKERS 123

2283

INTRODUCTION

All work is hard unless you care for it and are interested in it. Interest is to work what oil is to machinery. A machine operating without oil will grind itself to pieces and shorten its life and in the meantime use more power and produce less. The human body, like a machine, has only a certain period in which to serve and live.

There is no such thing as an easy job that is worth while. Some kinds of work require muscular activity; others demand mental activity. In either case, any worth-while job just about balances with the amount of energy that it requires in the course of a day. If the work is of a kind that you care for, you will accomplish more and be less worn out at the end of the day.

All kinds of honorable work are necessary to society. Whatever one's job or position may be in industry, one should become acquainted with what goes before or comes after the particular task upon which one is engaged.

The conditions found in any industry affecting hours, wages, surroundings, and workmanship are largely dependent upon the interest, the intelligence, and the cooperation of those engaged in it. No one ever gets a dollar that he does not earn without some one's earning a dollar that he does not get.

PART I

OFFICE OCCUPATIONS

FIG. 1.—This view shows an office boy taking a message over the telephone.

MY LIFE WORK

CHAPTER I

THE OFFICE BOY

THE PLACE OF THE OFFICE BOY IN BUSINESS

The place of the office boy in business is one of service to the officials and the office employees of the concern for which he is working. His duties are mainly those of assisting the other workers in the performance of their work and of taking care of many details which his superiors do not have the time or the desire to handle. In addition, his place is that of an understudy or learner of the different jobs in the office.

Considering the occupation from the point of view discussed in the above paragraph we can see that the office boy fills an important place in the modern business office. He helps in keeping the office running smoothly and efficiently by the many duties that he performs. His work is important because it relieves the older and more valuable employees of many minor responsibilities which would interfere with their work. The office boy is of value, also, because he is preparing himself or being prepared to take on more important duties as vacancies occur in the office force. It is, therefore, wrong to think of the office boy only as the youngest and least important employee in an office. When one remembers that many great business men of the past and the present started their careers as office boys, one can see what possibilities are open to the workers in this occupation. Therefore,

the office boy is really of great importance in the plan of recruiting and maintaining an efficient office force.

Types of Office Boys.—In modern offices, girls are sometimes employed to do the work which was formerly done by boys. This development has come about only recently and was the result in many cases of the shortage of boys due to the unusual business conditions following the war. Many employers have since decided to hire girls to do some parts of the work. But boys are still in great demand for those positions that carry some responsibility with them and that are stepping-stones to higher executive positions in the office.

There are three types of occupations in this classification. One type is the most commonly known as the office boy or girl in the usual commercial or business office. Another type is the bank page whose duties are somewhat similar to those of the office boy in the commercial office. The third type in this group is the bank messenger who has some duties that correspond to those of only a few office boys, while he has many other duties. Banks do not employ girls for these positions.

THE WORK OF THE OFFICE BOY

What Does the Office Boy Do?—The office boy has many duties. As a rule they consist of distributing and collecting papers and mail, carrying messages and sometimes packages about the office, to the factory, or to customers throughout the city, and answering the telephone when others are too busy to do so. He also operates such office machines as the envelope-sealing machine and the stamping machine. He fills inkwells, puts the officials' desks in order, and makes himself generally useful in helping the other members of the office force. Sometimes his duties include meeting callers and directing them to the officials or the departments to which they wish to go.

The bank page also has a variety of duties. He carries messages and papers from place to place in the bank, assists in the handling of the mail, carries telegrams, answers the buzzer signals, and runs errands of various sorts for the different officials. In addition, he takes care of the desks of the officers and sees to it that they are supplied with ink, pens, pencils, paper, and other necessary supplies.

The bank messenger's work keeps him away from the bank for a great part of the day. He makes calls at other banks and at business houses where he delivers and collects currency and financial papers of all kinds. At times he delivers bundles of check books and other miscellaneous matter; but as a rule he delivers and collects drafts, checks, receipts, notes, currency, and sometimes legal documents, such as bonds and certificates of stock. Once in a while he may be requested to perform other services, such as assisting in the mailing department or in the filing, sorting, and listing of checks and deposit slips. Upon returning to the bank, after he has completed his outside work, the messenger must balance the collections with the route sheet and hand over to the proper persons all the papers he has collected. The messenger's work carries a great deal of responsibility with it, and only the most trustworthy boys are chosen for that position.

Places of Employment.—The workers in this occupation are employed in banks, factory offices, commercial and business offices, telegraph offices, law and real-estate offices, bond and stock houses, department-store offices, insurance and railroad offices, and in other places. In each type of office mentioned, the office boy performs services that are necessary if the work is to be done smoothly and efficiently.

Conditions of the Work.—Office working hours are usually eight per day and four or five on Saturday. Office boys under sixteen are not allowed to work more than eight hours per day. Some places, such as factory offices, may require longer working hours to correspond to those of the factory.

The pay of the office boy varies with his age, the work required of him in the different types of office, and the

FIG. 2.—The office boy in this picture is operating a machine which stamps and seals envelopes.

length of time he has worked in any one place. Nowadays, these boys receive from $8 to $16 per week. Those boys who are under sixteen and who have had little education naturally receive less pay at the start than the boys who have completed some high school and commercial courses. Bank pages and messengers usually begin at a salary of $40 per month, which they receive for three months. At the end of that period they are given raises if they show that they can make good, intelligent workers. In these occupations, increases in pay depend upon the

ability of the boy and his willingness to work hard. The salaries quoted above are only those paid to beginners; as a rule they are increased as the work of the office boy increases in efficiency.

Office boys in factory and business offices are employed steadily when conditions are good. When there are times of depression, and business is not doing well, they

FIG. 3.—The boy in the picture is preparing to send out the evening mail.

stand the same chance of being laid off as do the workers in the factory. Of course, as soon as they make themselves very useful through efficient work, the chances are that they will be kept steadily at work, no matter how bad conditions are. Bank pages and messengers are very seldom laid off during times of depression, because banking institutions are usually busy all year round.

The work of the office boy is usually performed in clean surroundings. He very seldom does any work that might be called dirty, and most modern offices have

washrooms where one can remove any dirt that has been accumulated during the day. His work is also very interesting and instructive because it brings him in contact with a great variety of people and with every branch of the concern which employs him.

HOW ONE MAY BECOME AN OFFICE BOY

Qualities of a Good Office Boy.—The office boy who wishes to be successful in his work will try to be clean and neat at all times. This means that he will keep his clothes clean and in good condition, and that he will try to keep his personal appearance above criticism.

The office boy must be courteous and tactful in all his dealings with fellow employees, with his superiors, and with outsiders. He must be dependable, watchful, and attentive; and he should know his place in the organization. The dependable boy does exactly as he is told to do; the watchful boy is always on the alert to observe what will be of value to him in his work; the attentive boy pays close attention to his work and listens carefully when orders are given him, thus saving the time that would otherwise be lost when directions or instructions must be repeated. Ability to cooperate with others and loyalty to the firm for which he works are other qualities which are essential to a successful performance of the duties of the occupation. The office boy must also be punctual and should possess initiative without waiting for definite orders or instructions. In addition, he must take an intelligent interest in the work of the concern by which he is employed.

Age Limits.—Boys and girls are sometimes hired for this position when they are fourteen years old, but the average age for entrance is about sixteen. Boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen are hired as bank pages and messengers. Some banks, however, prefer boys

who are eighteen and over for the messenger positions. Very few persons remain in the office-boy class when they pass the age of eighteen. By that time they have been promoted or have gone into some other type of work.

Educational Requirements for Entrance.—For entrance to this occupation at least a common school education is desired. The office boy should be able to

FIG. 4.—A duplicating machine is being operated by the office boy in this picture.

write well; he should have a good knowledge of arithmetic; and he should spell well. He should also be able to use the English language correctly and his conversation should be free from slang expressions. It is of advantage to him to know all parts of the city, especially if he is required to run many errands. A knowledge of office practice and business letter writing will make him more valuable to his employer and thus aid in more rapid promotion. Some employers require their office boys to have a year or two of high-school education

before they employ them. A person who has had high-school training is, of course, better able to do the work than one who has not had such training.

PROMOTION

Possibilities for Promotion.—The office boy who applies himself has as many opportunities of advancement as any other office employee. Some people maintain that his opportunities are even greater than those of any one else because he has the chance to gain a general knowledge of the business before choosing to enter the department that he likes the best. The work of this occupation usually enables the office boy to come in contact with every phase of the work in the office and in the factory. The result is that he becomes known to all the department heads who may ask for him as vacancies occur in their departments. The following statement shows what possibilities in the line of promotion there are for the office boy:

. . . The messenger, furthermore, comes into contact with more people connected with the business than does almost any other office employee. He is constantly sent by one executive to another. He not only learns to know them all, but they soon learn to know him. They are quick to note how well or how poorly he handles his office duties. For example, the advertising department manager is impressed with how well Tom, the messenger, does his work; how he always finds something to do while waiting for a return message; how he always makes a note of what is told him; how intently he listens to directions, and how particular he is to get the message clearly in mind; and how very rarely is there any misunderstanding on account of failure on Tom's part to deliver a message exactly as it was given him. He notes his interest in the illustrations used in the advertising; how often he asks intelligent questions about advertising work; how much he has already learned about type, ink, etc. He decides that Tom is the kind of boy he wants for his department—to learn the business. It usually happens, however, that the sales manager has also noted Tom's ability, as he has come to his office

from time to time, and has resolved that at the earliest possible opportunity he will make a place for him in his department and train him to be a salesman. Likewise the office manager has his eye on Tom. The credit manager, the principal buyer, and other executives are watching Tom with a fixed purpose in mind to ask for him soon. There is keen competition for Tom's services, and he may choose the particular department he likes best.[1]

Although there is no definite line of promotion, the way is clear for any office boy who is ambitious and who sees that his job, instead of being merely a job, is a stepping stone to greater and more responsible positions. It is necessary, therefore, that the office boy should prepare himself through education and by keen observation for the better things to come.

The bank page is promoted to the position of messenger when he shows ability to handle the tasks given him. The messenger has the opportunity of going into one of the many departments of bank service. He may go into the inside clearing house, the bookkeeping department, the teller service which is divided into many branches, the foreign department, and many other departments. The next step in the promotional line is to the position of department manager; and from there on advancement to the highest positions, such as cashier, vice-president, and president, is open to those who show the greatest ability. Most of the responsible officials in practically all banks to-day began their careers as pages or messengers.

Education and General Knowledge Required to Secure Promotion.—The kind of education one must secure in order to gain promotion depends a great deal upon the type of work one chooses to do. However, it is well for all persons who choose business as a career to have a knowledge of business English, business arithme-

[1] "Junior Business Training" by Frederick G. Nichols, p. 165.

tic, letter writing, office practice, commercial law, and citizenship. In securing the knowledge outlined above, one builds a broad foundation upon which future success depends, because general elementary information must be gained first before specific and technical information can be acquired.

If one wishes to become a bookkeeper and then an accountant, courses in accounting should be taken along with a general education or after it has been completed. If one's desire lies along the lines of traffic management, it is necessary to concentrate on training that will make one efficient in that work. No matter what department one enters—sales, advertising, shipping, purchasing, production, etc.—special education can be secured which will train one to handle the job in a very efficient manner. There must be a combination, however, of general business education with specialized business education. General education will enable the office boy to secure a foothold in the business world while the specialized education will help him to secure advancement along the lines of work he may wish to choose as a career for life.

Opportunities for Securing the Necessary Education.—Education along commercial lines may be secured very easily. All the high schools have excellent basic commercial courses which prepare one for entrance into the business world. Of course, one must attend high school full-time to get the most benefit out of these courses. For those who must go to work after they complete their grammar-school education, commercial training is given at the part-time vocational school in some cities on the single day of the week that all working children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen must attend. The public schools also offer evening commercial courses. In the evenings advanced training can be obtained by those who have already had the preliminary educa-

tion. Commercial education of college grade is offered by the extension divisions of the different universities by correspondence and in evening classes.

Readings

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"Survey of Junior Commercial Occupations," *Federal Board for Vocational Education, Bull.* 54, June, 1920, p. 45.
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Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Why is the work of office boys and bank pages considered so important? Explain in detail.

2. Find out what duties the office boy performs by reading and by questioning those engaged in the work. List the information you have obtained and state briefly whether you like the work of this occupation.

3. How can an office boy train himself for future promotion?

4. Why does personal appearance mean so much in the business world?

5. Investigate the career of some successful business man. Note where and how he started. What factors accounted for his success in life.

6. What is tact? Why is it necessary that an office boy should possess this quality?

CHAPTER II

THE SECRETARIAL WORKER

FIG. 1.—A stenographer is typing a letter while receiving dictation from a record on the transcribing machine.

CHAPTER II

THE SECRETARIAL WORKER

THE PLACE OF THE SECRETARIAL WORKER IN BUSINESS

Ever since business offices have been in existence, the services of special kinds of workers have been required to write the letters and other documents that are used in commercial transactions. These people, who may be called the secretarial workers, are in the modern business world the typist, the stenographer, and the private secretary. In the days before the typewriter was made commercially practicable, the secretarial workers wrote all communications and documents by hand. Today only personal letters are written by hand as a rule, while all business and official letters and papers are typewritten. The secretarial worker renders an important service because a great deal of business is transacted by means of the written rather than the spoken word. Since the business man is dependent upon her for the speedy, accurate transmission of his communications, it is clearly evident that he needs her services in his daily work. She aids him also in many other ways and, in fact, is in many cases a real help to her employer by keeping him in touch with all of his many activities and by reminding him at the proper time of matters which require his immediate attention. She is more than a mere writer of his letters when she begins to take so great an interest in his business that he will feel able to transfer certain responsibilities to her care. In conclusion, it may be said that the secretarial worker is a necessary person in every business office, because she is the one

who writes the letters and transcribes the other documents that are essential to the satisfactory progress of business. Thus she has made a place for herself in the business world because she has been able, in connection with her other duties, to assist her employer in performing his duties more efficiently.

Not so very long ago there were very few girls and women employed in business offices, but in recent years a great change has taken place. Women and girls are now considered the ideal persons for these and other office positions. Some men are still employed as secretarial workers, but this is an exception to the general practice that is followed in most offices.

THE WORK OF THE SECRETARIAL OCCUPATIONS

Places of Employment.—Every business office in the city employs at least one of the three kinds of workers classified under the secretarial occupations. Many of these offices are very large and consequently employ numbers of typists and stenographers to do the routine work. Only the higher and more important officials require the services of a private secretary; and, therefore, there are not so many positions of that kind as there are of the other. Other offices, such as educational, governmental, charitable, legal, and every other kind of establishment which has any clerical work at all, also require the services of secretarial workers.

Conditions of Employment.—The hours of work are not the same in all offices. As a rule, however, office employees in most business houses work eight hours a day during the week and a half day on Saturday. During the periods when business conditions are better than at other times, they may be required to work overtime. All women employees must be allowed one hour for lunch, according to the state labor law. But if there

is a cafeteria on the premises, their lunch period may be cut to 45 minutes.

The beginning salaries of secretarial workers are not always the same. Some of these workers enter the occupations with better training than others, which means that those who have made such preparation are

FIG. 2.—This view shows a group of stenographers at work in a glass-enclosed room.

somewhat older than the ones who have not tried to gain much training before applying for work. Of course, the well-trained and educated persons are given the preference when vacancies occur; and, as a rule, they receive higher salaries even at the start. After experience has been gained and ability to do the work has been shown, the salary increases in proportion. Beginners in this field receive salaries which depend mainly upon previous training and education, and increases are based upon the proven ability of the worker. Nowadays typists, stenographers, and private secretaries who are

efficient receive salaries that enable them to live in ordinary comfort.

Steady employment all year round in any kind of work depends, to a certain extent, upon the individual's ability, experience, and education. Other conditions, such as business depressions, bankruptcies, and the like may also determine whether a person will be kept

FIG. 3.—A typist at work.

steadily employed by one concern. Some industries are more seasonal than others, and in those industries it is possible that the workers will find that employment is not as steady as it is in others. But it is true in all lines of work that the person who has become efficient is the one who is kept at work the longest when it is necessary to cut down the number of employees.

Office work is usually the cleanest kind of work and is performed in pleasant surroundings. Physically, it tires one out less than does factory work, but it does demand the use of mental energy. There are no dangers

in this work which may come as a result of contact with machinery, but office workers should make it a point to get as much exercise and fresh air as possible, since their work is usually of a confining nature. Sitting at a desk all day long may cause illnesses which can be prevented only by securing plenty of fresh air and exercise.

What Do Secretarial Workers Do?—The chief work of the typist is to typewrite all kinds of copy, including such matters as form letters and orders. When she has no typing to do, she assists in the office work by helping to open the mail, to file correspondence and other documents, and to perform other general clerical work. Typists also transcribe letters from the dictating machines that are now quite generally used.

The stenographer's main duties are to take dictation from her employer or from officials of the firm for whom she works and to typewrite what has been dictated to her. She must also make carbon copies of all letters and papers typed and prepare them for filing. Where the office is small, one of the stenographer's duties is to take care of the files. In a large office where there are many stenographers and a great deal of correspondence is carried on, file clerks are employed to keep track of all letters and papers. In such offices, the stenographer simply writes letters and other matter in shorthand and then transcribes them with the aid of the typewriter. The average stenographer must be able to write a certain minimum number of letters every day. In some offices the stenographer's work includes opening the mail, answering the telephone, and performing general clerical work when there is no stenographic work to be done. These offices are usually small and do not employ very many persons.

The private secretary is a sort of superstenographer. She must be able to perform many duties in addition

to those of the stenographer, which she must know also. Briefly, the private secretary opens the employer's mail, sorts it, reads it, and classifies it for his convenience; she takes dictation, typewrites correspondence and other papers, making carbon copies of all typewritten matter. At times, she files certain correspondence which her employer desires to have ready at a moment's notice,

Fig. 4.—A business man is dictating a letter to his secretary.

and in connection with her filing duties she prepares indexes. She also takes care of her employer's personal file and his bank account and sometimes prepares his income-tax statement. The private secretary receives all telephone calls for her employer and transmits them to him if they are important. She receives callers and makes appointments for her chief, secures travel and hotel reservations for him when he travels, and prepares his train schedule. If any problem requires immediate attention, she sends telegrams and cablegrams. The

secretary's position is the most varied and interesting of all office positions.

The "Tools" of the Secretarial Worker.—The "tools" and the materials of these occupations are the typewriters, which are the most important, pencils, pens, notebooks, dictating machines, paper and letterheads, carbon paper, filing cabinets, and index cards. The secretarial worker will make her services more valuable if she will become acquainted with the operation of such office machines as the mimeograph, the addressograph, and some of the calculating machines.

HOW ONE MAY BECOME A SECRETARIAL WORKER

Education and Training Needed for Entrance.—The kind and the amount of education and training a person has will determine somewhat the progress she will make in this field of commercial work. In order to be a good typist, one should have at least a common-school education together with a thorough knowledge of typewriting, business English, office practice, and business arithmetic.

The stenographer should have some high-school education. Many employers are demanding high-school graduates for this type of work. She must be well-trained in shorthand and commercial correspondence, as well as in typewriting, spelling, penmanship, business English, office practice, and business arithmetic. By obtaining a high-school education, she prepares herself for promotion to better-paid and more responsible positions.

The private secretary occupies the best paid and most responsible positions in the secretarial occupations group. This position requires a very high type of person both from an educational and a practical standpoint. Although many secretaries today are only high-school graduates, the tendency is toward employing college

graduates for this important position, because it requires some one who is well informed and cultured. Of course, the secretary must be able to typewrite well, write shorthand, and have the general technical knowledge required of the stenographer. In addition, she should know something about banking procedure and simple bookkeeping and must have a thorough knowledge of her employer's business. The combination of business college and university education is the best possible preparation for the work of the private secretary.

Age at Which One Can Become a Secretarial Worker. It is not advisable for any one who is sixteen or below that age to attempt to hold a position as typist or stenographer, because very few people of that age have the judgment and the ability to do the kind of work required in an efficient manner. It is best to wait a few years longer until more education has been obtained before entering these occupations, because advancement is then more rapid. Secretaries are usually mature persons, and in many cases they are promoted after having successfully served as stenographers. Without a college education, it is usually impossible to become a secretary if one has not had practical experience. Since the average age of college graduates is twenty-two, it can be seen that very few persons under the age of twenty-one are hired as secretaries.

Physical and Personal Qualities.—The secretarial worker should try to be neat, clean, and attractive in appearance at all times and should show good taste in the choice of her working clothes. For example, she should never wear clothing to work that is suitable only for dances or other social functions. These occupations do not demand any special physical qualifications. Those who are in them must be in good health and should have good eyesight. Eye defects should always be corrected.

They must have the use of both hands, but no other outstanding physical qualities are necessary.

To be successful, the secretarial worker must be accurate in all her work, punctual, courteous in her dealings with others, and able to adapt herself to many conditions. She must have tact, which is another way of saying that she must be able to deal with people without giving offense; and, of course, she is expected to be loyal to her employer. The stenographer or secretary must be personally loyal to her employer, more than to anyone else, because she handles many matters that are of a confidential nature. One authority has made a list of 45 vocational traits or qualities which employers consider a secretary should have. Some of them have been mentioned above; but included in this list are also such qualities as executive ability, alertness, intelligence, pleasing voice, and good manners. It is evident, therefore, that the secretarial occupations must be filled by persons who, in addition to being good workers, are also people of forceful and pleasing personalities.

PROMOTION

The Promotional Steps.—The lines of promotion are not quite the same for each of the three types of secretarial workers. Of course, the typist and the stenographer may be promoted to the position of private secretary if they obtain the necessary education and possess the required qualifications.

The typist also may be promoted to be the head of a section of typists. If she learns shorthand, she may become a stenographer and eventually a private secretary.

The stenographer may be promoted to be the head of a section of stenographers in a large office. She may become a court stenographer or a public stenographer

in a hotel, but the most logical step upward is to the position of private secretary.

Most private secretaries remain as such because as a rule they have reached the highest point in the secretarial occupations group. Some people in this occupation, usually men, have been promoted to executive positions in the concerns where they were employed.

How May Promotion Be Secured?—Promotion may be secured only after a person has gained the necessary education and experience and has shown that he has the ability to handle the next higher position. Experience, of course, is gained by actually working at one of the occupations. Education can be secured by attending some school or by completing correspondence courses. In order to be in line for promotion, the secretarial workers, especially the typist and the stenographer, must master such subjects as advanced business correspondence, commercial law, economics, advanced dictation, and business organization. In addition to that, all secretarial workers, including the private secretary, should make a thorough study of the details of the business in which they are engaged. Knowledge of the processes, the products, and the departments of the business in which a typist, a stenographer, or a private secretary find themselves, will make them very valuable to their employers and will result in promotion to better-paid and more responsible positions. A general knowledge which is the result of good education will also aid in securing promotion, because employers depend upon their secretarial workers to a great extent to supply any information that they themselves may not have.

It is, therefore, quite necessary that all persons who have ambitions toward secretarial work should attend school as long as possible before entering these occupations. It has been shown before that the tendency

nowadays is to fill the highest positions in this group with college graduates. Of course, not all of us have the opportunity to attend college; but there are many opportunities of broadening one's education without attending college. However, it must be remembered that education combined with practical experience and ability are the factors that determine promotion.

How May Education Be Secured?—Education may be secured in several ways. One way is to attend high school full time and then to complete a university course in commerce. Another method is that of finishing the four-year high-school general and commercial courses, securing a position and attending evening classes in college work given by the extension divisions of the various universities. There is still another way of securing an education which can be followed by some. This method requires completion of the eighth-grade work in the common school and attendance in the commercial courses of the part-time vocational school or trade school. After this has been done, night-school work should be taken up in high-school and college subjects.

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Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Why is the work of the stenographer so important in business?

2. In what way is the private secretary helpful to her employer?

3. What qualities are necessary to success in the secretarial occupations? List them in detail.

4. Name ten places that you know of where typists, stenographers, or private secretaries are employed. Describe the work of the secretarial workers in one of these offices.

5. Describe the part of the work of these occupations which interests you the most. From the information you have obtained through your own observation and through reading what can you say about the secretarial occupations as a career for women and girls?

CHAPTER III
THE CLERICAL WORKER

FIG. 1.—A paymaster of a large concern.

CHAPTER III

THE CLERICAL WORKER

THE PLACE OF THE CLERICAL WORKER IN BUSINESS

It has long been a belief held by many people in industry that clerical workers are not so important as the people who do the actual work of production. However, when we examine the work of the office employees and learn how it is closely related to that of the other branches of business, we can see that there is a real need for such a class of workers. These workers are a necessary part of any business establishment because their work consists of gathering and keeping accurate record of the many activities in which all kinds of industries are engaged. Records of all kinds are needed by the heads of commercial and industrial concerns to enable them to be more efficient and more progressive managers. It has been found, therefore, that no business could run smoothly without including in its organization some departments which would have as their duty the collection of records and the transmission of some of these to the executive officials. Office workers are employed for this purpose. Since clerical workers make up the greater part of any office force, it is evident that they have a place of importance in the business world and contribute much to the efficient management of any concern.

What Types of Clerical Workers Are There?—The work of the modern office is divided into many parts, in order that business may be transacted more efficiently. Thus, some clerical workers do nothing but file and keep

in order all letters and other records and documents of the business. Another group handles the mail, while still others perform all the clerical work connected with the shipping or the receiving of goods. The records of stock, the cost of production records, the payroll, and the timekeeping records are all handled by different groups of office workers. In this chapter, the work of the following types of clerical employees will be discussed: the general clerk, the shipping clerk, the receiving clerk, the stock clerk, the file clerk, the mail clerk, the cost clerk, the payroll clerk, and the timekeeper.

THE WORK OF THE CLERICAL OCCUPATIONS

Places of Employment.—Clerical workers are found in every kind of business establishment. They are

FIG. 2.—A receiving clerk unpacking a shipment.

employed in factory offices; general offices connected with manufacturing concerns; real-estate, legal, and banking offices; department store offices; wholesale house

offices; and city, county, state, and federal government offices. This is only a partial list of the places where clerical workers are employed. But wherever business of any kind is carried on, we are sure to find some of the types of clerical workers mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

FIG. 3.—A shipping clerk checking an invoice against a shipment which is ready to go out.

Conditions of Employment.—The hours of work of the various types of office employees vary in the different offices. In factory offices, the employees as a rule work as many hours as do those engaged in the actual work of production. These may be nine or ten hours per day. In other kinds of offices, the employees are engaged for about eight hours per day and a half day on Saturday.

Each business establishment has its own standard of salaries for its office employees, which to a certain extent is not the same as in any other organization. Furthermore, salaries fluctuate so much that a true picture could

not be given of the average earnings of clerical workers by simply telling here what some particular persons earn. However, it is true that beginners in these occupations receive fairly good initial salaries. As they increase in efficiency and add to their knowledge of the work, salaries are also increased. In these occupations the worker has an opportunity to make himself so valuable that concerns will pay well for his services. There is no limit to the earning capacity of any one in the commercial world who is efficient and ambitious. Employment is usually steady all year round except in times of extreme depression when office workers, as well as factory workers, must take less than full-time employment.

Except in factories where the offices are sometimes dusty and dirty, the work of the office employees is usually performed in clean, pleasant surroundings. Some of the larger firms operate cafeterias and restrooms for their employees.

What Do the Clerical Workers Do?—The clerical workers in each group discussed in this chapter are engaged in work which is different from that performed by any other group. The duties of each type of clerk will be outlined in the following paragraphs.

The *general clerk* does work which is quite varied. This type of clerk is usually found in small offices where the duties are not divided among a great number of workers. The work consists of answering the telephone, sorting and arranging vouchers, preparing and making bank deposits, copying contracts, filing, typing, handling mail, meeting callers and giving them information, checking orders, and making out bills.

The *shipping clerk* prepares goods for shipping, checks orders against invoices and shipping receipts, checks goods to see that all articles called for are in the ship-

ment, weighs shipments, prepares freight bills, looks up routes, records shipments made, and mails shipment papers.

The *receiving clerk* usually has charge of all incoming material. He unpacks the goods received and checks the articles in the shipment against the invoice to see

FIG. 4.—A stock clerk placing stock on shelves.

that all the merchandise has arrived. He also watches to see that the articles are delivered in good condition by the railroad company. If any article is damaged, he makes note of it on the bill of lading before signing it. When goods are returned, he checks them and notifies the proper department of their return. The receiving clerk is also responsible for all merchandise that comes in until it is removed from his department to the storeroom or to the various departments. All freight or express that is received is receipted for by the receiving clerk or one of his assistants. As a rule, those who enter

this occupation begin as assistants to the receiving clerk.

The *stock clerk* works under the supervision of the head of the stock department if he is employed by a large concern. He receives merchandise and stores it until it is needed, checks it with the buyer's orders and with the invoices, and keeps records of the stock on hand.

FIG. 5.—These payroll clerks are checking the weekly pay roll.

He delivers new stock to departments when requisitioned and marks goods for identification.

The clerk in the stockroom issues samples of the goods handled by the salesmen and keeps records of such transactions for the bookkeeping department. His duties also include the keeping of records of goods returned to stock, preparing inventory from stock records, keeping stockroom files, and notifying buyers or department heads when stock runs low.

The *file clerk* has charge of the files or sometimes only of a section of the files of a business organization. The

duties of the file clerk are to file letters, vouchers, reports, notes, and all other papers for future reference. The file clerk in most concerns is a woman. She prepares folders for special use, plans filing systems for special purposes, and gets from the files any material required. Her work includes the classifying of all material to be

FIG. 6.—File clerks are shown securing material from the files for persons who have requested it.

filed so that it can be referred to easily, keeping index-card files and cross-reference files, and transferring old material to "dead files." The file clerk of today is considered one of the most important workers in a business office because she makes the records more usable and therefore more useful.

The *mail clerk* usually handles all the incoming and outgoing mail of the concern by which he is employed. He sorts the incoming mail, distributes it to the various departments and individuals, collects outgoing mail, and prepares it for mailing. He receives all special-

delivery, parcels-post and registered mail and also sends out such materials. The mail clerk keeps in touch with the postal authorities so that he will be posted on all regulations and changes in regulations, as well as on the time of arrival and departure of mail trains. This clerk must take outgoing mail to the post office in addition to his other duties.

The *cost clerk* works under the direction of the cost accountant. He prepares the production records and assists in figuring the cost of manufacturing of the various products. The duties of this clerk include keeping of records of cost of materials, labor and overhead expenses, or office and administration expenses. All records that have any connection with the cost of manufacturing are handled by the cost clerk.

The *payroll clerk* assists in preparing the payroll from the records furnished by the time-keeping department. Usually the payroll department is placed in charge of a man called the paymaster. After the payroll is prepared, the clerk determines the amount of each denomination of money needed and makes out a change memorandum. He also prepares a payroll bank slip and gives it to the person who gets the money from the bank. If the employees are paid by check, the payroll clerk prepares the pay checks. When the money is brought from the bank, this clerk helps to put it into the envelopes.

The *timekeeper* and his assistants keep records of the presence or the absence of each employee in the establishment. These records show at what time in the morning each employee arrived and at what time during the day he left. The time records are kept for the purpose of determining the wages due each employee. The duties of the position include looking after the timeclocks and regulating them, keeping the card racks in order, preparing cards every week and placing them in the

racks, preparing reports of time worked for the payroll department, and issuing card numbers to new employees. In some small concerns the timekeeping and the payroll departments are usually in charge of one person, and the clerks do the work of both departments. However, where large numbers of workers are employed, each department has its own organization.

The occupations outlined above are those most common to a great majority of the business offices. Many offices have developed occupations that are peculiar to their special kinds of business, and as a result those occupations will not be found in any other office. Training for such special types of work can be secured only in the particular offices where they are found and in no other places.

HOW ONE MAY BECOME A CLERICAL WORKER

Education and Training Needed for Entrance.—All clerical workers require about the same kind of education before entering this field. They should be able to write legibly; they should have a knowledge of business terms and words; and they should know how to spell well. A knowledge of arithmetic is also necessary. Those persons who are able to operate a typewriter will find that for many of the clerical occupations such ability is essential. Training in office practice before entering the business world will make entrance easier for the prospective clerk. Some persons go into these occupations with only a common-school education, which is the least amount of schooling with which one should enter the commercial field. But employers are beginning to realize that persons of limited education cannot do the work efficiently; and, therefore, they are giving preference to those who have had high-school preparation. If it is possible to do so, every one who has

the ambition to succeed in the business world should complete a high-school course. Special courses are being offered in our high schools and in the part-time schools for those young people who wish to enter the commercial world. These courses include the study of commercial English, business procedure, methods and systems of filing, typewriting, business correspondence, and arithmetic. The persons who complete such courses can feel reasonably sure of being able to do efficient office work.

Age at Which One Can Become a Clerical Worker.—The age of entrance into these occupations varies with the type of work done. Some of these occupations demand more mature persons, because the work is more responsible and requires more intelligence. As a rule no one is accepted below the age of fifteen for any of these occupations. For the occupations of receiving clerk, shipping clerk, cost clerk, payroll clerk, and clerk in the timekeeping department employers prefer as beginners persons who are about seventeen or eighteen. For the other office occupations discussed in this chapter employers are willing to hire persons as young as sixteen years of age and train them until they are efficient.

Physical and Personal Qualities.—There are five qualities which all clerical workers should possess if they wish to be successful in the commercial world. They must be *trustworthy*, which means that they must be honest and dependable in everything they do. They must be *loyal* to the persons or firms for whom they work. A person who is loyal to his employer is one who has a liking for his job, who works at it conscientiously, who has the best interest of the employer at heart, and who tries to increase his efficiency. Clerical workers must also be *accurate* and *punctual*. Those who make mistakes and are never on time cause delay and inefficiency in

the carrying on of the office work of any concern. In addition, all office workers should possess *initiative* or the quality of being able to do things without first waiting for instructions from one's superior.

All clerical workers should have good eyesight. Defects of the eyes should be corrected, because office workers use their eyes to a greater extent than almost all other types of workers. The workers in this group of occupations must be as careful of their health as are those in any other group. Shipping, receiving, stock, and mail clerks are usually boys or men. The file clerks are usually girls and women, while the other occupations in this group are filled by men or women.

Shipping, stock, and receiving clerks must be strong enough to handle large quantities of materials. The file clerk must have a good memory and nimble fingers. The cost clerk, the payroll clerk, and the timekeeper must have a liking for arithmetic and for a great deal of routine work. The general clerk must have the ability to do different kinds of work in the course of the day.

PROMOTION

The Promotional Steps.—Every one who enters the commercial world has an opportunity to advance provided he has the ability and the willingness to work. The line of promotion varies somewhat for each occupation. For that reason, the promotional steps and the education required to secure promotion will be discussed for each occupation separately.

There is no definite line of advancement for the *general clerk*. This worker may develop into a supervisor of a group of clerks who are doing the same kind of work, a head file clerk, an office manager, or a correspondent, depending upon his ability and liking for the work. These positions are the ones most easily obtainable for

the general clerk. They can be secured only after the necessary education and experience have been obtained. Experience comes only through actual office work, while education may be obtained before the clerk enters the commercial world or during the time he is holding a position. He should obtain as much training as possible in commercial correspondence, business arithmetic, typewriting, business organization and administration, English, and commercial law, if he wishes to advance.

The boy who enters the shipping department as a *shipping clerk* or as an assistant is in line for promotion to the position of superintendent of the shipping department. The way is then open to him to become a traffic manager or a salesman, because of the knowledge he gains of methods and means of shipping and also of the products handled by the company for whom he is working. To fulfill the educational requirements for advancement one must have a knowledge of English, commercial correspondence, transportation, commercial geography, and commercial law. The practical experience necessary to secure promotion includes a knowledge of methods of wrapping, crating, and boxing for domestic and foreign shipment, and of rates of shipments of different kinds. In order to be of greater value to his employers, he should have a thorough knowledge of the workings of the factory. If he desires to be a salesman, he should be informed about all of the products handled by the concern for which he works. In addition, he should make a thorough study of salesmanship.

In the receiving department of any concern, the beginning occupation is that of *assistant receiving clerk* or in one of the less important positions. The immediate prospect of promotion is to the position of receiving clerk. The highest and most responsible position in this department is that of superintendent. There is an

opportunity for the receiving clerk to branch out into the purchasing department. One of the first requirements for promotion in this department is to gain a thorough knowledge of every department of the concern as well as an equally detailed knowledge of the materials used by the organization which employs him. He should also make a study of commercial law, methods of billing, English, and commercial correspondence, in order to fit himself for promotion. If he desires to rise in the purchasing department, he must obtain a technical knowledge of materials used by his concern, and he must become familiar with prices quoted on these materials.

The *stock clerk* usually begins as an assistant or office boy in the stock room. The next step upward is to the position of stock clerk, and the final promotion in this department is to the superintendency of the stockroom. Outside of the stockroom there is an opportunity for the ambitious person to work into the purchasing department and eventually to become a purchasing agent or buyer. Advancement in this work is also based upon possession of a combination of practical experience and education. The stock clerk who wishes to advance should study commercial correspondence, business practice, and business organization, and he must become familiar with all materials handled by his concern. Moreover, he should gain a thorough knowledge of commercial geography, which will give him information as to where supplies can be obtained. Commercial arithmetic is also a subject which the stock clerk should study. Combined with his education he should have much practical experience on the job, in order to gain advancement.

The *file clerk* who enters business directly from school is first put at assisting some of the more experienced

clerks in the department. Then she is given charge of a section of the files and is held responsible for all correspondence and documents placed in that section. After her ability has been tested, she may be promoted to the position of chief file clerk. This is a very responsible position, and very few file clerks ever attain it or secure positions that are more responsible. The exceptionally bright and ambitious girl may become a correspondent or an office manager. As far as educational qualifications are concerned, most employers prefer high-school graduates for this kind of work. To fit herself for the higher positions, the file clerk should also make a thorough study of advanced filing methods, English, commercial correspondence, office management, and commercial law.

The *mail clerk*, like the office boy, has no definite line of advancement. Promotion for him will depend upon what he seems to be best fitted for. Thus, the opportunity for the worker is unlimited. He may go into the sales, purchasing, production control, accounting, and other office departments and work his way up in them. The mail clerk should prepare himself for advancement by increasing his efficiency in the mailing department first. He must become acquainted with post-office regulations and should learn how to operate all machinery connected with mailing procedure. A knowledge of geography will also increase his efficiency in this work. In order to prepare for entrance to other departments where the opportunities for promotion are greater, the mail clerk should secure a general commercial education. Such an education includes the study of commercial correspondence, economics, business arithmetic, filing methods, elementary bookkeeping, English, and business organization. It really requires a high-school education to enable one to master all the subjects mentioned above.

The *cost clerk* is usually the beginner in the cost department. In this department the promotional steps are three in number. The first is to assistant bookkeeper, the next step is to bookkeeper, and the final promotion is to the position of cost accountant in charge of the department. While the cost clerk does not need any specialized training before entering the occupation, advancement would be more rapid if he entered with some knowledge of bookkeeping, business arithmetic, office practice, and business forms. In order to hold more advanced positions, he should acquire a thorough knowledge of advanced bookkeeping, accounting, cost accounting, advanced business arithmetic, and economics. In addition, he must become familiar with every detail of the business in which he is employed.

In the payroll department the entrance occupation is either that of *office boy* or *assistant payroll clerk*. From this position the first promotion is usually to that of *payroll clerk*, then to assistant paymaster, and finally to paymaster. To prepare for promotion he should make a study of bookkeeping, English, business arithmetic, and the latest methods of preparing payrolls and paying off of employees. A knowledge of the operation of office machines is also an aid to success in this work.

The *timekeeper* and his assistants aid the payroll department in determining the amount of wages due each employee by the records they keep of his absences and of his working hours. The promotional line in this department is from assistant timekeeper or clerk in the timekeeper's office to timekeeper in charge of the office. The clerk in this department should have a knowledge of bookkeeping, business arithmetic, accounting, and office practice if he wishes to gain promotion. He must also be familiar with the operation of all office machines and appliances.

Does Education Pay in the Business World?—Any one who wishes to be successful should have, in addition to such personal qualities as initiative, honesty, loyalty, and so forth, something else which will enable him to advance. This "something else" is the ability to express oneself clearly and briefly, the ability to concentrate on a subject and analyze it fully, a foundation of elementary knowledge upon which can be built a structure of practical experience and technical knowledge, and some, if not all, of the technical knowledge necessary to hold positions of responsibility. How can such a foundation be secured? The answer is: Through education. It is a well-known fact that many employers are hiring only high-school graduates for office work; and in many cases where there is a possibility of promotion to the highest positions, they insist on employing college graduates only. This is because those persons who have completed high-school and college courses already possess the necessary qualifications for employment and with a little training can be made into intelligent, efficient workers. On the other hand, those with little education require a great deal of training and watching by their employers, with the result that much more time is spent on them than on the employees who are better prepared. Since time is very valuable in the business world, employers do not care to spend it on unintelligent and uneducated workers, and so they turn to those who have obtained the necessary qualifications. Not only do they give them preference when hiring workers; but, in addition, they give them first consideration when vacancies occur higher up. Education, therefore, is a decided advantage to those who make the effort to obtain it.

Where Can Education Be Obtained?—There are two ways of obtaining an education. One is by attending school full time until it is completed, and the other is by

attending part-time day school or evening school and by completing correspondence courses. If one must go to work before such education can be secured, however, it is possible to obtain it after working hours or in the part-time school. Both elementary and advanced commercial courses are offered in the day and evening classes of the public schools. Further training in commerce can be obtained at the extension divisions of the different universities and in the public high schools.

Readings

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"Manual for Pages and Messengers," published by the First Wisconsin National Bank, Milwaukee.
"An Analysis of the Work of Juniors in Banks," Eva Jessup and Clyde Blanchard, Division of Vocational Education, *Bull.* 4, Part-time Education Series No. 5, University of California.
"Junior Business Training," F. G. Nichols.
"Descriptions of Occupations, Office Employees," prepared by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the U. S. Employment Service.
"Survey of Junior Commercial Occupations," *Federal Board for Vocational Education, Bull.* 54, June, 1920, pp. 42–47, inclusive.
"Office Training and Standards," F. G. McClelland.
"Office Administration," J. W. Schulze.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1 How important is the office in the operation of any business? State some specific reasons for the need of offices.

2. Why should a mail clerk have a knowledge of geography?

3. Why is the work of the file clerk important? Explain some of the things a file clerk is required to do.

4. What are the duties of the receiving clerk? What must he know to be able to perform them efficiently?

5. What promotional possibilities are there for the stock clerk, the shipping clerk, and the cost clerk?

6. In what way is the payroll department connected with the time-keeping department?

7. What group of workers is discussed in this chapter? Which occupation interests you the most? Outline briefly the entrance requirements, the personal qualifications needed, and the promotional possibilities in the particular line of work which especially appeals to you. Show the relationship between this occupation and the other occupations in this group.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACCOUNTING OCCUPATIONS

FIG. 1.—This is a general view of a statistical and accounting department office of a large concern.

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CHAPTER IV

THE ACCOUNTING OCCUPATIONS

THE PLACE OF THE ACCOUNTING OCCUPATIONS IN BUSINESS

It has been said that the accounting department of a business makes a record of the pulse of that particular organization. In other words, it keeps track of all of the activities of the business, in order to be able to tell how it is functioning. This is done by collecting information from all the departments and then studying and organizing it. In this way, the accounting department can show which branch of the business is most efficient and which is least efficient. It can also show the relationship between the departments in any business by a study of its records, and it gives the business man a thorough understanding of the way in which his concern is organized and functions. Without accounting records no business may expect to run smoothly and efficiently. Those who work in accounting departments are the ones who collect the information, study it, and present it to the head of the business in such a manner as will enable him to determine very quickly whether or not it is being operated successfully. It is evident, therefore, that persons engaged in accounting occupations are an important group in any kind of business. They occupy a responsible position in the commercial world. Consequently, we should make a thorough study of their occupations and thus determine whether we wish to enter this field of business activity.

Kinds of Accounting Occupations.—Modern business organizations have successfully increased production by

establishing a system of specialization or division of labor. That means that each worker has some special job to do which is part of the whole job of turning out a completed product. This division of labor makes each worker very efficient at his particular task, and as a result production is increased. Many people think of the division of labor as related to factory work only, but this is not the case since the same principle has been applied to office work as well. In the accounting department, several distinct occupations have been created.

In this chapter there will be discussed the work of the *statistical clerk*, the *ledger clerk*, the *entry clerk*, the *bookkeeper*, and the *accountant*. These are the most common types of accounting occupations. Many concerns have developed special kinds of occupations which are not the same as in any other business, but they are all related to the ones listed above.

THE WORK OF THE ACCOUNTING OCCUPATIONS

Places of Employment.—Accounts are kept by every kind of business. Every commercial establishment and all government departments, schools, hospitals, churches, and other institutions of any kind must keep accounts or records. This means that persons who learn this branch of business administration can find work almost anywhere if they are thoroughly prepared.

Conditions of Employment.—Office employees usually work eight hours per week day and four hours on Saturday. Those who work in the accounting department are no exception to the rule. While the pay of beginners in this work is not very high, still it is in proportion to the responsibility assumed and the amount of work done by those who first enter the accounting occupations. As the efficiency and the knowledge of the workers increase, their pay will also increase.

Most offices are clean and well-lighted, and there are no dangers in office work comparable to those found in factory work. The office worker must, however, be just as careful of his health as is the factory worker, because his efficiency is lowered when his physical condition is not what it should be. Commercial occupations require sitting at desks most of the day with very little bodily

Fig. 2.—A bookkeeper and her assistant at work.

movement. This is not good for one's health. Therefore, accounting workers should see to it that they get as much exercise and fresh air as possible when they are away from their places of work. In this way, they will be able to keep up their health as well as their efficient work.

What Do Accounting Workers Do?—Accounting is another name for record keeping, and most of the work of the accounting department is in connection with the accurate keeping of the records of any business. The interpretation or explanation of these records is also part of

the work of the accounting department, but this is done only by the more experienced and better educated workers. In the following paragraphs, we shall discuss the work of the statistical, the ledger, and the entry clerks, the bookkeeper, and the accountant.

The *entry clerk* usually works under the supervision of the head bookkeeper. He enters or writes orders on

Fig. 3.—A group of ledger clerks at work. Many modern concerns use a loose-leaf ledger system such as is shown here.

billheads for the sales department, and he prepares credit information for the credit department. Routine entries or written records of financial transactions are made by this clerk in the cash registers and in the other record books of a business. Some of these record or account books deal with purchases, some with claims, others with sales, and so on. The main work of the entry clerk is, therefore, that of writing into the account books of the concern all the records that have anything to do with the financial or money side of the business.

The ledger is the chief book in the accounting department. In it are kept the summarized financial records of any business organization. The work of the *ledger clerk* is that of transferring items from the various accounts to the ledger. In some business organizations he may be required to prepare statements. Sometimes, if he is trustworthy, he is allowed to make a trial balance which means that he balances the accounts to see whether the assets of the business equal the liabilities plus the net worth. However, the work of keeping the ledger posted or all the entries up to date is enough to keep him busy all day long.

The *statistical clerk* works under the supervision of the accountant if he is employed in the accounting department; however, his services may be used by other departments of a business. He is also found in many government departments. He collects, checks up, corrects, and tabulates figures given him by the various departments. In the accounting department he obtains his information from the various record books. The statistical clerk also presents the information he has gathered in the form of graphs, charts, and tables. These graphs, charts, and tables explain more clearly the figures or reports prepared by the accountant or by the statistican.

The work of *bookkeepers* in small business offices is different from that required in offices of large concerns. Usually in a small place one or two people do all the work, while large establishments have many employees in their accounting departments and the work is highly specialized or divided. The man who is employed by a small concern can be called a *general bookkeeper* because he handles all the record books of the business. In these books, he enters all the business transactions, such as purchases, sales, cash, vouchers, and so forth. He also transfers summarized accounts from the various books

to the ledger, makes trial balances, and prepares financial statements and other reports. In other words, he does all the bookkeeping work.

The bookkeeping work of a large concern is divided. Such an establishment employs *assistant bookkeepers* and *expert* or *supervisory bookkeepers*. These persons must be able to do the work of a general bookkeeper and, therefore, must have the same training and the same knowledge. The assistant bookkeepers work under the supervision of the experts and are required to do any work that is asked of them. The expert or head bookkeeper has charge of the general books of the concern and supervises the work of the assistants and also the preparation of monthly trial balances, financial statements, and other required reports.

The accountant is usually a professional man, and in most cases nowadays he is a college graduate. He has charge of all the financial records of a concern; and, of course, he is head of the accounting department or is in direct line for that position. He is the man who makes up new bookkeeping systems to suit the needs of the particular firms for which he works. The accountant decides what statements and financial reports shall be prepared, and he explains or interprets these results to the heads of the firm. His work helps the executives to determine the financial policy of the concern.

HOW ONE MAY BECOME AN ACCOUNTING WORKER

Education and Training Needed for Entrance.—If you wish to be successful at any kind of work, you should secure a certain amount of education and training before entering the commercial world. This is especially true of the accounting occupations, because bookkeeping and accounting are technical subjects which cannot be mastered entirely on the job.

There are different grades of occupations in accounting work. The educational requirements for entrance to the minor occupations are not as high as for the more important ones. Therefore, the person who wishes to enter the business world as a ledger clerk or as an entry clerk needs a common-school education with some special training in elementary bookkeeping, business arithmetic, business English, typewriting, and the operation of bookkeeping machines. Although these clerks may not be called upon to do much typewriting, the ability to do so may help in securing advancement.

Employers are requesting that those persons who wish to become statistical clerks should complete a high-school course before entering the occupation. The special requirements for this work call for a knowledge of elementary statistical methods, of mathematics, and of the operation of some computing machines. In addition, it is quite necessary that any statistical clerk who is employed in the accounting department of a concern should have some knowledge of bookkeeping.

Although it is possible to learn bookkeeping without a high-school education, it is very desirable that every one who wishes to become a bookkeeper should also complete a high-school course. To be successful in this occupation one must have a thorough knowledge of double-entry bookkeeping. Business English and business arithmetic should also be studied before beginning to work. An understanding of the operation of some computing machines is of value in this occupation.

To become an accountant one must have at least a high-school education. The accountant must be familiar with all forms of bookkeeping systems, and he must have a knowledge of business English, business arithmetic, and business organization. Nowadays a college education in commerce is becoming to be considered as one of

the requirements for entrance to this field. Such a course includes the study of economics, commercial geography, higher accounting problems, commercial law, and such cultural subjects as history, languages, and the sciences. The accountant must have a wide general education in addition to his accounting knowledge. because he is called upon to recommend and make changes in business organizations after making a study of the information he has gathered. It is best, therefore, that he secure as much education as possible before entering the occupation.

Age at Which One Can Become an Accounting Worker.—The age of entrance to the accounting occupations varies. For the minor occupations, such as entry clerk and ledger clerk, sixteen or seventeen years is the minimum age at which one will be employed. Statistical clerks and assistant bookkeepers must be at least eighteen years old at the beginning of their business careers. There is no definite age limit for entrance as bookkeeper or accountant, but one must be fairly mature and preferably have some experience.

Physical and Personal Qualities.—All accounting workers must be honest, accurate, neat, and clean in their work. They should also be patient and should have the ability to concentrate on whatever they are doing. The accounting worker must be accurate because mistakes may mean a loss of money to his employer. He must be patient in order to be able to check up carefully columns of figures when mistakes have been made. He should also be mathematically inclined so that he will find work with figures interesting rather than dull; and above all, if he wishes to be successful, he should be interested in business in general.

There are no outstanding physical qualities that an accounting worker needs. He should be in good health;

and if he has any eye defects, he should have them remedied. But he should try to keep his good health by exercise, by securing plenty of fresh air, and by paying careful attention to his diet. Office workers frequently become ill because they do not keep in mind the fundamental rules of health.

PROMOTION

The Promotional Steps.—Promotion to more responsible and better paid positions is something that all of us desire. In the accounting occupations there are several lines of promotion. Every one who enters this work must start rather far down the line, although the ones with better education and training can expect to be given more consideration in assignments to work. Entry and ledger clerks, who have the proper qualifications and personal characteristics, may advance to the positions of assistant bookkeeper, bookkeeper, and head bookkeeper. If they are exceptionally well qualified, they may become accountants or auditors. Those who have had bookkeeping and accounting training before beginning to work for a living are usually started as assistant bookkeepers. Advancement for them is more rapid than it is for the untrained persons. The line of promotion for them is from assistant bookkeeper to bookkeeper, head bookkeeper, and accountant or auditor in charge of the entire accounting system of a concern. Some persons who have obtained a great deal of training in school combined with practical experience become consulting accountants and are called *certified public accountants*. To secure such a title they must pass an examination in many subjects and must have certain educational qualifications. These will be discussed later.

The statistical clerk usually follows a different line of promotion unless he has had training and experience in

bookkeeping. In government departments the statistical clerk may become the head of a group of such employees. In private employment his best opportunity for securing promotion is through the accounting department. If he has a knowledge of bookkeeping, he follows the same line of advancement as that laid out for the assistant bookkeeper.

Educational Requirements for Promotion.—It is a well-known fact that an education is one of the stepping stones to success. This is particularly true of the accounting occupations because they require a great deal of somewhat technical education, especially in the higher positions. Any one who wishes to be promoted in the accounting department must have a thorough knowledge of bookkeeping as a basis. Then he must acquire a knowledge of accounting theory and practice, commercial law, economics, and auditing. Those who wish to become certified public accountants must be familiar with different accounting systems and the federal and state income-tax laws in addition to the subjects outlined above. In order to be allowed to take the certified public accountant examination, one must have completed at least a high-school education.

The educational requirements for promotion in the accounting department are high, but they are not out of reach of any one. The standards are high because these occupations are important in the business world. It is necessary, therefore, that those who enter the accounting work should remain in school long enough to complete a bookkeeping course and graduate from a high school. Since education is one of the standards used in judging applicants for a job, it can be seen that the person who has the most at any one time is usually chosen. Education is always helpful in securing promotion because it prepares us for advancement by teaching us how to think

besides giving a knowledge of the work. That is why college-trained persons advance faster than those with a high-school training, and that also is why the high-school graduate is promoted more rapidly than the eighth-grade graduate. Education is an asset in modern industrial life, and it is becoming more important every day.

Where Can the Necessary Education Be Secured?—Practically all the high schools in the city offer commercial courses where bookkeeping can be studied along with other commercial and general educational subjects. The various universities all over the country have schools of commerce where training in accounting, commercial law, and other higher commercial subjects can be secured. One must be a high-school graduate if one wishes to attend these institutions. The part-time vocational schools, give short courses in bookkeeping for those who are not able, financially, to attend a full-time school. The commercial high schools and private business colleges also prepare individuals for the commercial world. Those people who are already in industry can obtain the necessary education by attending the night classes offered by the vocational schools, the high schools, and the extension divisions of the universities. The ambitious person will find that there are a great many opportunities open to him for securing a better education.

Readings

"Descriptions of Occupations—Office Employees," prepared by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for U. S. Employment Service, pp. 9, 10, 13, and 17.
"Junior Business Training," F. G. Nichols.
"Office Training and Standards," F. C. McClelland, Chap. XI.
"Business," published by Boy Scouts of America, pp. 20–22 and 25–27.
"Occupations," Gowin, Wheatley, and Brewer, pp. 245–246.
"Opportunities and Requirements in Local Occupations," prepared by Board of Education, City of Detroit, Part III, pp. 14–15.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Present a detailed statement showing why the accounting department is important in any business establishment.

2. What qualifications must one have to be a good bookkeeper or an accountant? Check them to the best of your ability to see whether you are able to meet the requirements of these occupations. Prepare a statement showing what you must do to enable you to meet these requirements.

3. Why is education of such great importance in the accounting occupations? What special subjects should one study in order to become proficient in this field of work?

4. What is the highest point within the reach of the bookkeeper? Prepare a chart showing the promotional steps in accounting work. On this chart indicate the starting point of an eighth-grade graduate, a high-school graduate, and a college graduate. Also show on the chart the promotional possibilities open to the eighth-grade graduate, the high-school graduate, and the college graduate.

CHAPTER V

THE OFFICE-MACHINE OPERATOR

FIG. 1.—A group of billing-machine operators at work.

CHAPTER V

THE OFFICE-MACHINE OPERATOR

THE PLACE OF THE OFFICE-MACHINE OPERATOR IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

We all know that modern factories are the result of the development of different kinds of machines. Without the use of these machines they could not produce as much as they do now, and neither would they be able to employ such large numbers of workers. When it was found that the efficiency and the speed of production in factory operations were increased by the use of machinery, it was thought that the same would be true of office operations if machines were invented that could be used to replace hand work. In fact, the invention of such machines became a necessity, in order to keep up with the increasing volume of business and the growing complexity of business procedure and business records. After these machines were invented and put into practice, it was found that they were so useful that modern offices could not get along without them. They are useful because the office-machine operators can with their aid produce greater quantities of work which is neater and more accurate than the work which was turned out under the old system. In other words, office machinery made office work more efficient.

The establishment of new methods of work led to the development of new types of occupations. Since office machines became indispensable, it was found necessary to train people to operate them. These people are called

office-machine operators, and they and their work are to be discussed in some detail in this chapter.

The Kinds of Office-machine Operators.—There are many different kinds of office machines, and for each kind a trained operator is needed. These operators can be classified in several large groups. Thus, the machine operating occupations can be listed as follows:

Bookkeeping-machine operator
Calculating-machine operator
Duplicating-machine operator
Tabulating-machine operator
Billing-machine operator.

The above-named occupations will be discussed in this chapter.

The typist is sometimes included in the office-machine operators' group. However, the work of this individual is discussed in full in the chapter on the secretarial workers. Any one who is interested in this occupation may find there the complete details of the work in which the typist is engaged. One of the latest developments in office work is the adoption of dictating machines. These machines are used by business men in the place of stenographers. They dictate their letters to these devices which have cylinder records, and which are operated in the same way that the phonograph is. When the dictation is completed, the record is removed from the dictating machine and is placed on a transcribing machine which is used by the typist. This machine has hearing tubes connected with it, the tips of which are placed in the ears of the typist. The typist then starts the transcribing device which reproduces the voice of the dictator, and she types the letters as if she were receiving personal dictation. The operation of this apparatus can be learned in a short time.

THE WORK OF THE OFFICE-MACHINE OPERATORS

Places of Employment.—Every modern office has one or more machines. It can be seen, therefore, that operators of these machines are in demand in the business world. In some small offices several machines may be very easily operated by one person; but in large offices, where there is a great deal of work to be done, the work is usually specialized, and each operator handles only one machine.

Conditions of Employment.—The hours of work in most offices are eight per week day and four on Saturday. Some factory offices may require longer working hours to conform to those of the factory worker. The salary of the beginner is in proportion to the age and the previous training of the worker. As experience is gained and efficiency is increased, the salary rises until the highest point is reached.

An efficient worker can be sure of steady work all year round. In times of depression, when business is slack, and people are being laid off, it is usually the ones who are inefficient that are the first to go. This is true, of course, in all lines of work.

The office-machine operators usually work in clean, well-ventilated, and well-lighted surroundings. The work on some of the machines may cause dirty hands, but most places provide washrooms where all dirt may be removed before the place of employment is left at night. Office workers, however, as well as other indoor workers, are apt to notice the effects of confinement. It is necessary, therefore, that all such persons should try to get out of doors as much as possible after working hours, and while there they should exercise briskly. It is possible in this manner to prolong one's efficient working life.

What Do Office-machine Operators Do?—The *bookkeeping-machine operator* works under the supervision of the head bookkeeper. In a commercial office the work consists of making entries or records in the books of a company with the assistance of the bookkeeping machine. This clerk is also engaged in taking trial balances, which is simply a method of verifying and checking to see that

Fig. 2.—These calculating-machine operators are working on payroll figures in the paymaster's department of a large concern.

both sides of the account books balance. In a bank office, the bookkeeping-machine operator checks the work of the teller and prepares the monthly statements of the checking accounts.

The *calculating-machine operator* works with the various makes of adding or calculating machines. The work of this clerk includes figuring and checking of invoices, payrolls, and inventories. She also works on statistical tables. In the auditing department she checks the books to see if the amounts recorded are correctly added and

figured; she figures profit and loss statements, discounts and interest, and income-tax reports. With the aid of the calculating machine she can add, subtract, multiply, and divide much more quickly and accurately than she could do mentally.

The work of the *duplicating-machine operator* consists of operating machines which will turn out many copies

FIG. 3.—Four bookkeeping-machine operators at work.

of the same thing. Among the machines he may be required to operate are the multigraph, the mimeograph, the hectograph, the ditto machine, and the graphic duplicator. He may also be asked to run such machines as the addressograph, the Elliot addressing machine, and the indexograph, all of which are addressing devices. In addition to the duties outlined above, he must keep records of the material used and the number of copies made. The stencils and other duplicating materials are placed in his care as well as the files of copies of all matter that is duplicated. Both boys and girls are employed for this kind of work.

The *tabulating-machine operator* has charge of a machine which is operated by electricity and which assembles and sorts cards according to any classification desired. The operator first punches holes in the cards according to some system that has been decided on beforehand. Then these cards are run through the sorting machine to get the classification wished for. After all the cards have been eliminated that do not have the information desired, the remaining cards are run through a counting machine which gives the totals wanted. The operator reports this total to the person who asked for the information.

The *billing clerk* usually works in the shipping or sales department. He prepares the invoices or bills that go with the goods that are shipped. This is done either on a special billing machine or on the typewriter, whereas at one time all the billing was done with pen and ink. This clerk also verifies the prepared invoices and sends them to the various departments where they are mailed or recorded in the books.

HOW ONE MAY BECOME AN OFFICE-MACHINE OPERATOR

Education and Training Needed for Entrance.—As far as general education is concerned, every office-machine operator should have completed the eighth-grade work. This is really the least amount of education any one should have to be able to make some progress in the business world. Furthermore, all persons intending to go into the commercial world ought to have some education and training in business subjects. Business arithmetic and business English will be of great help to any office worker. It is necessary, therefore, that all office-machine operators make a study of these subjects before actually going to work. It is well also to have training

in typewriting and in the preparation of business forms before entering these occupations.

Specialized training, of course, must be secured before taking up one of the office-machine occupations. For this reason the billing clerk must learn how to operate the typewriter and one of the special machines used for billing purposes. The bookkeeping-machine operator

FIG. 4.—This picture shows tabulating-machine operators running punched cards through the counting machine.

must know how to operate efficiently one of the makes of bookkeeping machines. He must also have some knowledge of bookkeeping. The calculating-machine operator should know how to operate at least one of the machines used in most offices. A knowledge of bookkeeping and advanced business arithmetic will be of value to this worker because it will enable him to work more intelligently. The duplicating-machine operator must be able to operate one or more makes of these devices with speed, accuracy, and a minimum amount of spoilage. Training

for operating the addressing machine and some of the other duplicating machines can be obtained right on the job. Some schools, however, are beginning to teach people how to operate the multigraph, in order that they may be able to secure work more easily. No specialized training in the operation of tabulating machines can be secured outside of a business house which has one of these machines.

Fig. 5.—Mimeograph-machine operators at work.

Age at Which One Can Become an Office-machine Operator.—The minimum age for entrance to all of the occupations, with the exception of that of the bookkeeping-machine operator, is sixteen years. Since the work of the bookkeeping-machine operator is quite responsible and important, a boy or a girl should be at least eighteen years old before entering the occupation. In fact, many employers will not hire people who are below the age of eighteen for this kind of work.

Physical and Personal Qualities.—Most of the office-machine operators are girls and women. They must be neat, clean, and accurate in their work. They should have some mechanical ability, in order to be able to keep their machines in good running order. It is also necessary that they be honest and trustworthy. Since a great deal of the work of these occupations is of a routine nature, it is well that those who are thinking of becoming office-machine operators should recognize the fact that the work has a great deal of sameness about it.

PROMOTION

The Promotional Steps.—There is no definite promotional line open in most of the occupations of this group. Promotion for the office-machine operators depends mainly upon their ability to choose some other line of office work which is to their liking. When this is done, the next step is to prepare for this type of work in evening school and otherwise. It is necessary to do this because there is very little opportunity for promotion in the office-machine operating class. These occupations are simply stepping stones to other more responsible ones for those who desire to stay in the commercial world for the rest of their working lives.

The direct line of promotion for the billing clerk would be to the position of chief of a group of such workers. However, this clerk may become a stenographer or a bookkeeper with the proper preparation. The bookkeeping-machine operator may be put in charge of all the other workers in this class. After that advance has been secured, there is further opportunity for promotion in the accounting department. The next step would be to the position of ledger clerk, assistant bookkeeper, bookkeeper, and head bookkeeper. In a bank the bookkeeping-machine operator may become a teller and then

advance to an assistant cashiership or managership of a department.

Operators of duplicating, calculating, and tabulating machines have little opportunity for promotion if they remain in these occupations. The most direct line of advancement open to these workers is to the position of head of a group of persons doing the same kind of work. The duplicating-machine operator may establish a shop which will do this type of work for those who do not have the equipment to do their own duplicating work. The outlet from these occupations to something better will depend, in the main, on the ability of the individual and the preparation he is willing to make to gain advancement.

Education Required to Bring About Promotion.—Education is of greatest importance to the office-machine operators because without it they have little chance for promotion. They should attend high school as long as possible before entering the business world. The general education secured there is of value because it will lay the foundation upon which future development can be based. In fitting themselves for commercial careers these workers must also secure definite business education. Thus, those who wish to become stenographers should study shorthand, typewriting, spelling, business English, and commercial correspondence. Prospective bookkeepers should obtain a knowledge of bookkeeping, accounting, commercial law, economics, and advanced business arithmetic. Whatever line of advancement is sought must be prepared for thoroughly. Consultation with employers and others experienced in the work will determine just exactly what must be studied as a part of this preparation. After securing employment the worker may gain promotion by being on the alert to learn the details of the business with which he is connected. He

should be able to do his own work efficiently, and then he should try to learn something about that of the other workers. It must be remembered, however, that success in the commercial world usually comes after the necessary preparation is made.

Where Can the Necessary Education Be Obtained?—The general high schools, the commercial high schools, and the part-time vocational or trade schools give elementary business courses which will prepare one for entrance into the commercial world. The high-school courses usually cover a four-year period and include more than only business training. The courses at the part-time vocational school are shorter and more intensive and prepare for more immediate entrance to the commercial world. Advanced and elementary business education may be obtained through correspondence study or by attending night-school classes. The extension divisions of the various universities also offer courses in night classes which will be of great help to any one seeking advancement. It is possible, therefore, for an ambitious person to gain as much education as is needed for his purpose.

Readings

"Office Machines, Methods, and Appliances," W. Desborough.

"Office Training and Standards," F. G. McClelland, p. 158 and Chap. X.

"Survey of Junior Commercial Occupations," *Federal Board for Vocational Education, Bull.* 54, Commercial Education Series No. 4, pp. 44 and 46.

"Descriptions of Occupations, Office Employees," prepared by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the U. S. Employment Service, pp. 10, 11, 12, 14, and 19.

"Opportunities and Requirements in Local Occupations," Board of Education, City of Detroit, Part III, pp. 10 and 11.

"Junior Business Training," F. G. Nichols, Part I and Chap. XXVI of Part II.

"The American Digest of Business Machines," This handbook gives a complete description of all office appliances in use in modern places of business.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Make a list of all office appliances or machines with which you are acquainted. Check this with the catalogues published by manufacturers of these machines.

2. Which of the office machines are used in greater numbers than the others?

3. In what way would a knowledge of the mechanical construction of an office machine be of value to the operator? Would it be apt to increase his earning power?

4. In what way are modern offices more efficient than those of the past? What influence did the invention of office machines have in increasing the efficiency of office workers?

5. Ascertain from employment bureaus and any other source whether employers prefer male or female operators of office machines. State the reasons for the preference of either.

6. Make a list of the qualities necessary in a good office-machine operator. Make a list of your own qualities and characteristics. Check these lists to see if they coincide. What is there about the work of these people that interests you?

PART II

RETAIL-STORE OCCUPATIONS

FIG. 1.—This is a view of an order department of a large retail grocery. The boys in this department wrap the articles which are to be delivered to the customers. Many of these boys will be promoted to more responsible positions in other departments after they have shown their ability and willingness to work.

CHAPTER VI

THE RETAIL GROCER

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RETAIL STORES

Retail stores are the stores that sell their goods in small quantities to individual customers. The groceries at which most of us buy our foods are retail stores.

In the very early years of man's history there were no stores of any kind. In those days, each family was able to take care of itself. The food, the clothing, the shoes, the household implements, the working tools, the houses in which people lived, and the weapons they used in hunting and in fighting were all made by the members of the clan or the family. Primitive people, as they were called, were independent and needed nothing which they could not produce themselves. As time went on, it was found that certain people in the group became especially expert in making some of the necessary things. Thus some members of the community devoted themselves to the making of shoes, others became good weavers of cloth, while still others made the tools and utensils. These people then exchanged their products for the articles made by experts in other lines of work. This trading was done by the two individuals who made them. If a shoemaker wanted cloth, in order to make clothing for his family, he went to the market place or to the shop of the weaver and made the exchange directly with him. In this stage of man's development articles, such as clothing, were still made at home; and a great deal of the food was also raised in the family garden.

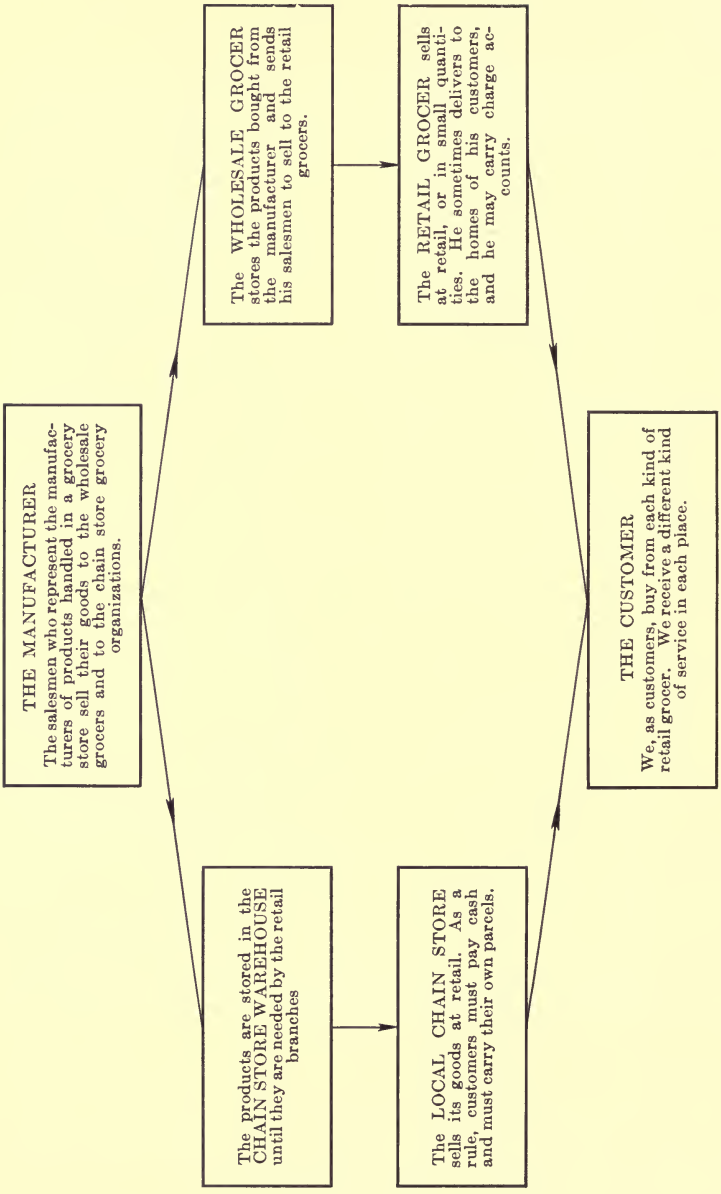
THE MANUFACTURER
The salesmen who represent the manufacturers of products handled in a grocery store sell their goods to the wholesale grocers and to the chain store grocery organizations.
The WHOLESALE GROCER stores the products bought from the manufacturer and sends his salesmen to sell to the retail grocers.
The RETAIL GROCER sells at retail, or in small quantities. He sometimes delivers to the homes of his customers, and he may carry charge accounts.
The products are stored in the CHAIN STORE WAREHOUSE until they are needed by the retail branches
The LOCAL CHAIN STORE sells its goods at retail. As a rule, customers must pay cash and must carry their own parcels.
THE CUSTOMER
We, as customers, buy from each kind of retail grocer. We receive a different kind of service in each place.

FIG. 2.—How groceries reach us.

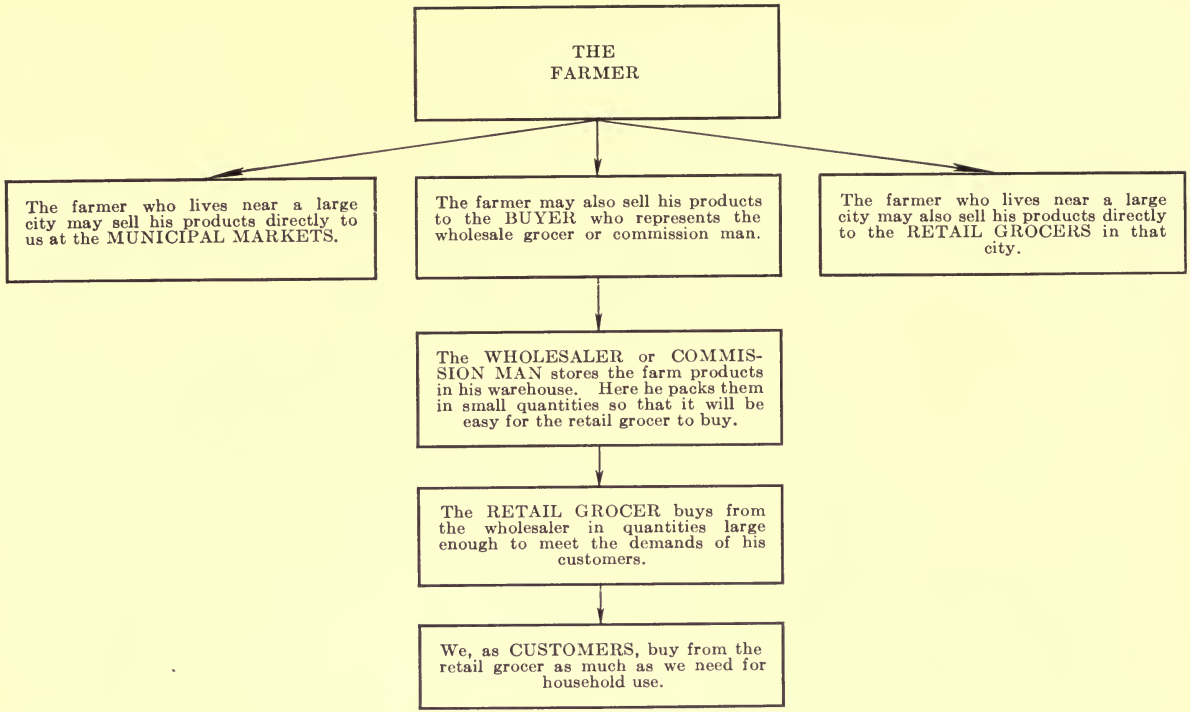
THE
FARMER
The farmer who lives near a large city may sell his products directly to us at the MUNICIPAL MARKETS.
The farmer may also sell his products to the BUYER who represents the wholesale grocer or commission man.
The farmer who lives near a large city may also sell his products directly to the RETAIL GROCERS in that city.
The WHOLESALER or COMMISSION MAN stores the farm products in his warehouse. Here he packs them in small quantities so that it will be easy for the retail grocer to buy.
The RETAIL GROCER buys from the wholesaler in quantities large enough to meet the demands of his customers.
We, as CUSTOMERS, buy from the retail grocer as much as we need for household use.

FIG. 3.—How farm products reach us.

Later, some of the producers began to turn over their products to other persons to sell because they were too busy or did not care for the selling activities. In turn, the people who undertook to sell the goods for others found that it was profitable, and so they gave up the producing end of their business and spent all of their time in selling. These people established shops or stores which sold only one line of goods, and the shopkeepers bought their goods directly from the persons who manufactured them in their own homes. When factories and large-scale production came into existence, it became impossible for the producers to go out to look for some one to buy his goods. As a result of this, there developed the wholesale house which bought from the manufacturer and sold to the retailer, who dealt directly with the customer. This system is in existence today to a certain extent. The manufacturers of the present make the goods and sell them to the wholesalers who are able to buy in large quantities. The retailers, who are the people that sell directly to us, are then enabled to buy whatever they need from the wholesaler. The charts pages 80 and 81 show how groceries and farm products reach us. An effort is being made by some manufacturers of today to sell directly to the retail dealers, but the usual method of getting articles to them is as indicated in the charts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RETAIL GROCER

The retail grocer is necessary in modern life because he performs a useful function. Our method of living is very much different from that which was followed in the earlier years of man's development. Instead of living in isolated communities and far apart from each other, the greatest number of us live close together in cities. We work in factories, offices, stores, and other places of

business; and, consequently, we have neither the time nor the ability to raise our own food supplies. We must have some one who will gather in one place the products of the farm, the dairy, the bakery, the canning factory, and the many other items that are necessary to make our meals. The retail grocer is the man who performs this service for us in exchange for a part of the money we earn at our various jobs.

FIG. 4.—This view shows a clerk engaged in selling some articles to a customer.

Another service of importance, which the retail grocer performs, is that of bringing together a great variety of food products from all parts of the world. He has in his store: coffee from Brazil, tea from Japan, rice from China, bananas from Central America, oranges and grapefruit from California and Florida, figs and dates from northern Africa, sea foods of various kinds, and innumerable other eatables which are produced in various places. Partly as a result of his efforts, our diet is not limited any more to a restricted number of foods.

The retail grocer is the final link between the producer and the consumer. He relieves us of the problem of raising our own food supply, and he helps the producer to distribute his food products in the cheapest way. If there were no retail stores, we would probably be compelled to go back to the method followed in the early days, whereby each person or concern that produced something was required to go to the market place to find buyers. Of course, that means that probably there would be no large factories turning out great quantities of articles, and there would be no large cities in which the workers could live, because each one would be faced with the task of producing his own supplies. Our modern methods of living require the existence of a go-between or a middleman who will buy from the makers of goods and sell to those who are in need of them. The retail grocer is one of the most important of the middlemen. Therefore, we should study his work to see what is required of a person who would like to enter this kind of business, and to see also what rewards are possible as the result of hard, diligent work.

THE TYPES OF RETAIL GROCERY STORES

There are two different types of retail grocery stores. One of these is called the *independent grocery*, and the other is known as the *chain-store grocery*. The independent grocery is owned and operated as a rule by one individual and in many cases it consists of only one store. In some cases, an independent grocer has operated one or two other stores in addition to his original one. The chain-store grocery, on the other hand, is one of a group of such establishments owned by a corporation and operated by a manager who is an employee of the concern. One of the big differences, then, between these two types of grocery business is in the method of

operation. In one the owner is in direct control, while in the other an employee acts as the manager. Another difference between the two is found in the fact that no two independent stores are alike, while every store in a chain is managed just like every other store.

Among the chain stores there are also differences. Some require the customers to wait on themselves, while others employ clerks to wait on the people who come to buy. Each chain has a different color scheme for its stores. Some desire only men as employees, while others hire women to fill the position of clerks. As a rule, all sales are for cash in groceries that belong to a chain, while some independent grocers sell their goods on a charge account and cash basis.

We shall find in our study of the retail grocer that there is a place in our scheme of food distribution for both kinds of groceries. Each type serves a very definite purpose, and the individual in either kind of store has the opportunity for advancement if he is progressive, hardworking, and honest. The grocery store under our present system is essential to our well being, and it does not seem likely that there will be any change in the near future. Since this kind of business seems to be permanently established, it should, therefore, be given serious consideration by those boys who feel that they are fitted for commercial pursuits.

THE WORK IN A RETAIL GROCERY STORE

The Duties of Each Worker in an Independent Store. There are various kinds of independent groceries. Some are so small that each is operated only by one person. There are others which employ several clerks apiece; and still others that are very large and that employ a large number of workers. As a rule, the independent groceries

employ both male and female help. The large stores usually divide their operations among several different departments, while in a small store all the work is performed by the proprietor and his family.

The work in any retail store naturally divides itself into two parts. One part includes the actual selling operations, and the other part deals with the buying and the miscellaneous duties needed to prepare the article for sale. It has been stated above that there are both large and small grocery stores. The average establishment usually has a working force which consists of the owner, a clerk or two, and in some cases a delivery boy. In a place of this kind, both the owner and the clerk or clerks sell to the customers. This is the most important work in any kind of retail store and it requires careful attention. The selling duties of the clerks require that they meet the customers pleasantly and courteously, tend to their wants promptly, and be well informed about the articles handled in the store. In addition to this work, the clerks must make change correctly when the customers pay the bills, and they must wrap the parcels in such a manner that it will be convenient to carry them. These workers also take orders over the telephone in many stores. The performance of this duty requires that they be courteous, and cheerful, and also ready to suggest items which they believe the customers might be interested in buying. In the course of the day's business these workers are called upon to perform many miscellaneous duties. These include dusting and keeping the store clean, washing the counters and the jars, and keeping the shelves in a neat and orderly condition. They are also required to make note of the goods on hand, in order to be able to notify the owner when it is necessary to replace them. When it is possible, they pack, in suitable quantities, such articles as potatoes and sugar,

in order to save time for themselves and the customers during the rush period of the day.

The duties of the owner of a small retail grocery are much more varied than are those of the clerks. His most important job is that of buying the goods which will sell well in his store. In connection with this job he

FIG. 5.—In this picture we see two grocery-store clerks engaged in placing goods on the shelves. This is one of the jobs of these workers.

must study the wants of his customers to learn which products they like the best; he must watch the market in order to be able to buy at the best prices; and he must examine and test the products offered him before buying them. The window-display work is usually done by him with the assistance of his clerk; and, as a rule, he keeps the accounts and instructs his help in the performance of their duties. The owner also waits on the customers, prepares the advertisements, checks incoming goods, decides when he will sell goods at reduced prices, and watches the stock, in order that the store may be fully supplied with all the items that are regularly sold. The

owner is, therefore, a very busy person, and he has many responsibilities.

Some small stores employ boys to do the delivery work. The delivery boy also has a number of different duties to perform. When he is not delivering parcels, he assists in the store in preparing packages that are to be taken to the homes of customers and in checking goods that come in from the wholesaler. Every day during the season he accompanies his employer on a buying trip to the fruit and vegetable markets to obtain these fresh products. In performing his delivery duties, the boy comes in contact with many of the store's customers. In dealing with them he should be courteous and obliging, and he should be careful not to destroy or damage their property. In this way he can gain their good will and keep them as customers of the store. Another of his duties is that of taking care of the delivery truck. As a rule, he must see to it that it runs well, he must keep it clean and supplied with gasoline and oil, and he must report promptly when the need for repairs arises.

The work in a large retail grocery store is somewhat similar to that carried on in the small store, except that it is divided among a larger number of people and that it is done on a bigger scale. Such an establishment usually has a number of departments, each of which is charged with a different kind of job. Some clerks in the *sales department*, for example, do nothing but sell to customers that come into the store, while others take telephone orders. In the *order department* some workers gather the articles called for on the order slips and place them on a counter where another group wraps them and gets them ready for the delivery men. *The delivery-department* employees load the wagons or trucks with the aid of the drivers. The drivers then deliver from house to house and collect for the goods they bring to those

people who pay cash for their purchases. In the morning, before they start out on their routes, they see to it that the automobile trucks or the horses they use are in good shape for the day's work. In the evening, they hand in the money collected during the day.

The buying duties, which are taken care of by the owner of a small store, are handled by a special department which employs experts in certain lines of merchandise. These men test and examine all articles offered to them by the salesmen who represent the wholesale grocers and the manufacturers, and then they buy in large quantities the goods which they believe to be best in quality and price. The buying function is a very important one, and it is given only to those who have had much experience in the grocery business, and a thorough knowledge of the products handled in that field.

The display work and the office work is performed by separate departments in a large retail grocery. The chapter on "Department Store Occupations," discusses fully the principles of retail-store display; and the chapter entitled "Office Occupations Series" takes up in detail the duties and the requirements of office workers. Therefore, the work of these people will not be discussed here.

The Duties of Each Worker in a Chain Store.—We have seen that there are two kinds of chain stores—those in which the employees wait on the customers and those in which the customers serve themselves. The workers in each of these two kinds of establishments have different duties to perform.

There are three classes of employees in the chain-store grocery in which the customers serve themselves. The beginning job is that of helper, which is usually held by a young man. He assists in unpacking goods, in placing them on the shelves, and in keeping the store clean and

neat. His work in this position will determine whether he will be promoted to the job of checker. The checker is the man who checks the articles as the customers bring them to the counter, wraps them securely, and collects the amounts charged. He is an important employee because he handles the concern's money and because his actions in dealing with the customers will cause them to form good or bad opinions of his place of business. He is the only worker in this kind of store who actually meets the people who buy. The store manager is the man in charge of a store in this retail chain-store grocery. This position is obtained only after experience in the other positions has been gained. The duties of the chain-store manager are quite varied. He must see to the replenishing of stock which is running low by requisitioning it from the central warehouses, and he is also responsible for the proper display of the goods on hand. All stores are judged more or less by their appearance, and one of the big jobs of the store manager is to keep his place neat and clean so that it will attract trade. This employee also has charge of the money taken in through sales for which he must account to the central office, and he must open the store in the morning and be the last one to leave in the evening. The responsibility for the success of the store rests on the manager, and, therefore, only the best men are picked for this kind of work.

The other type of chain-store grocery does not require the customers to wait on themselves. These two kinds of chain stores have points of similarity in that each sells only for cash and does not deliver the goods purchased by customers, and also in that the operations of each store are directed from a central office which does the buying and the planning for all the establishments under its control. In all other details, however, they are not the same.

This type of store is somewhat the same as the independent grocery in its operation in that it provides clerks to wait on the customers. The manager corresponds to the owner of the independent store in some of his duties, although he does not have the same amount of responsibility, and he must follow the regulations of the central office. The day's work runs along about in the following order. The manager usually opens the store between seven and eight in the morning. Then, with the assistance of whatever help he has, he cleans and straightens the store and the stock so that his establishment will appear neat and attractive. After this is done, he puts in his daily order for fresh fruits and vegetables either through the produce buyer who buys for all the stores, or direct to the commission house with which this particular chain deals. He also arranges for the delivery of milk, cream, and dairy products as early in the morning as possible. These and other duties connected with the operation of the store are performed during the spare times when there are no customers who wish to purchase goods. In addition, the store manager is required to prepare the money taken in for the previous day's sales, so that it can be turned over each day to the assistant superintendent. And once or twice a week he must also hand in a requisition for goods to replace that which was sold. In making out this requisition, he must watch his stock to see what lines of goods are most popular in his neighborhood and order accordingly. When he has people working under him, he supervises their activities and teaches them how to perform their duties. At times, when there is little to do, he and his assistant, or his assistants, put up in conveniently sized packages such articles that ordinarily come in bulk, as sugar and potatoes. The window display work is also taken care of by the store manager. It is evi-

dent from what has been said that his time is fully taken up with his duties.

These chain-store organizations employ a manager for each store and allow him to hire as much help as he needs to take care of the business. In some of the stores, the manager is given an allowance based on his sales for the week out of which he pays for whatever help he hires; in others the workers are employed through the central office and placed wherever they are required.

HOW TO BECOME A GROCERY-STORE WORKER

Education and Training Required.—Young men and young women may secure employment in the retail groceries of this city without having had any previous experience. They should have a certain amount of educational training, however, before applying for such work if they wish to be given the preference. Many employers prefer to hire people with high-school education for the positions in their stores, while others require only an eighth-grade education of the applicants. A knowledge of arithmetic, spelling, and writing is essential in practically every grocery-store job, and every worker should be thoroughly familiar with these subjects. In addition, it is desirable to have completed a business course in which bookkeeping, business principles, retail salesmanship, typewriting, and display work have been studied. A course such as this will aid the new worker to become an efficient employee in a comparatively short time. Young men who plan to enter this field would do well to learn something about the operation and the upkeep of automobile trucks.

Physical and Personal Qualifications.—All persons who hold positions that bring them in contact with people should be careful about their personal appearance. Workers in retail groceries should be neat and clean and

should try at all times to dress as simply and yet as attractively as possible. Young ladies should remember that party clothes are not fitted for working activities, and should dress accordingly. Good health is also essential in this line of work, for food products are being handled, and it is necessary to protect them as much as

FIG. 6.—This is a view of a loading platform of a large retail grocery store as it looks early in the morning when the wagons are being loaded for a day's deliveries.

possible. The duties of this occupation can be performed much better by people who have the use of all their limbs. Therefore, retail grocers usually hire persons who are not physically handicapped in any way. A sturdy body will help the young men to perform some of the lifting jobs that come up from time to time in a grocery store. The physical standards for work in this field are not very exacting, and almost all of us can meet them.

One of the most desirable personal qualities that a grocery employee can possess is that of cheerfulness.

The ability to meet a customer with a smile, to be tactful, courteous, and sympathetic is also required of all persons in this business if they wish to be successful. A grocery-store worker should also try to gain the ability to perform his duties without waiting for orders, and he should be able to understand the working principles of this kind of a business.

Method of Entrance.—Most young men enter the grocery business as delivery men and then work up, while the young women enter as clerks. Where no delivering is done, a young man begins as a helper in the store. He usually assists in packing bundles, in placing stock on the shelves, in cleaning, and in unpacking goods as they come in. The retail grocers have not yet worked out any apprenticeship plan whereby a definite period is spent in learning the business, but most of them agree that a year's training is required before one can gain a fairly good knowledge of the work involved. It takes fully a month before an inexperienced clerk can be allowed to perform his or her duties without being guided by the employer or one of the older workers.

Age and Sex Requirements.—Young men and young women are hired for work in grocery stores. There is need in these establishments for both sexes, so that girls who like to work in a retail business may look forward to positions in this field. As a rule, employers prefer young people who are seventeen years of age and over for grocery-store jobs. They feel that these persons are more in earnest and will settle down to steady work more readily than boys and girls who are younger. They believe also that, as a result of the added education which can be obtained by remaining in school a few additional years, the more mature young men and women can become valuable workers in a shorter time.

It is advisable, therefore, to remain in school as long as possible before attempting to enter this field of work.

THE WORKING CONDITIONS

The modern grocery stores are usually clean, well-ventilated, and well-lighted. Health regulations, as well as the desire on the part of grocers to make their stores more attractive, have brought about these sanitary and pleasant working surroundings. There are no dangers connected with this line of work, although care should be taken in lifting heavy objects so that no strain results. The duties of grocery-store clerks are varied to a great extent. Every customer must be dealt with in a different way, and many situations come up during the day that make the work far from monotonous. As a result, this field of business is interesting as well as profitable for those engaged in it.

The hours of work in a grocery are a little bit longer than those in industrial plants. Most of them open between 6 and 7 a. m. and close between 7 and 8 p. m. This is due to the fact that these places must be open early and late enough to be able to serve all customers. There is no Saturday afternoon holiday in this business as a rule. Usually that is the busiest time of the week because it is then that people buy their supplies for Sunday and the week following.

The wages paid vary in the different establishments; for that reason it would be difficult to quote an average wage that would be accurate. All groceries pay straight salaries, and in the chain store organization the managers receive a commission on the weekly sales. Some of these concerns set a goal and give a percentage of the sales that go above it, while others pay a straight commission on all sales. The manager who can increase the

sales of his store has the opportunity of earning much more than his regular wage.

One of the most attractive features of this business is the regularity of work throughout the year. There are practically no slack periods in a grocery because as the seasons change there is always a demand for food products that can be sold only at those times. In addition, there is a steady demand for the staple foods that people eat all year round. The result is that the work is steady and there are no lay-offs such as are found in some industrial occupations.

PROMOTIONAL POSSIBILITIES

The Promotional Steps.—The lines of promotion in a chain-store organization and in the large independent groceries are much more definite than in the smaller neighborhood stores. The qualities that make for success, however, are the same regardless of the kind of place in which you work. As a rule, advancement is secured only by those who have started at the bottom and have worked in every position in order of importance. This is especially true of the chain-store concerns which have a hard and fast rule that all promotions shall go to persons who are already within the organization. As a result, opportunities for development are very great in these organizations since they are expanding at a rapid rate.

The promotional steps are about as follows. In one of the chain-store establishments a young man may start as a helper or third man, work up to the position of checker and then, after a year or more of experience, he may secure a managership of a store. Another chain-store group starts young men as managers of individual stores after they have had about a month's training. Of course, these men are required to be older

than the ones who begin as helpers; and after they are placed in stores their work is very closely supervised by the officials. Managers in any chain-store organization may be advanced to the position of assistant superintendent in charge of a group of fifteen or twenty stores. Then they have the opportunity of becoming a superintendent with authority over a number of assistant superintendents. The position of general superintendent

FIG. 7.—Part of an interior of a modern, well-kept grocery store.

in charge of all the stores in a city or of a city and its immediate vicinity is the next promotional step open to chain-store workers. There are other higher positions open in this field, which are open only to those who are exceptionally well qualified by training and natural ability. There are very few of these positions, and the majority of employees cannot hope to attain them.

The first position that a boy may secure in a large independent grocery is that of clerk in the order department where he can become familiar with the merchandise

handled by weighing and wrapping it. From this department he may advance either to the sales work or to the delivery work. The salesman may become the head of a department and then a buyer of merchandise. The delivery man may become assistant foreman and then foreman of his department. Other miscellaneous positions are open to boys in these establishments, but they are peculiar to the different stores and need not be discussed in this chapter.

In the smaller retail groceries a boy or a young man may begin as a helper who delivers, unpacks goods, cleans, and occasionally waits on trade. Then he may be advanced to the position of clerk; and, after he has had several years of experience, he may become assistant to the owner or even a partner. The usual thing that he does, however, is to open a store of his own. This is done by a great many young men who have secured their training by working for some neighborhood grocer over a period of years.

The Value of Education.—Advancement in this field of work is based upon the experience one has had, upon the ability to do the work, upon such personal characteristics as initiative, willingness to work, courtesy, and cheerfulness, and upon a thorough knowledge of business subjects which aid in the efficient management of a store. These business subjects include bookkeeping, business English and correspondence, window display and advertising, commercial arithmetic, and commercial geography. It is true that the majority of the present-day grocers have not had the opportunity to master these subjects, but due to the fact that competition is becoming keener it is necessary to be thoroughly equipped in order to survive. The younger men should take advantage of their school years to prepare for the future.

Some may doubt the value of a business education for grocers and persons working in groceries. A brief review of what a grocer may expect to do if he has the knowledge outlined above may clear up this doubt. A knowledge of bookkeeping will enable him to keep his accounts in good shape, to know when his bills are due, and to determine whether he is making a profit or losing money. He will be able to write better letters and use good English if he masters business English and correspondence, while a study of commercial arithmetic will help him to figure costs, discounts, profit and loss, and numerous other items. Effective advertising is one of the best means of bringing in business, and every prospective grocer should make a study of retail advertising for that reason. Customers are attracted by well-planned window displays which can be arranged by any one who is familiar with this work. Finally, commercial geography will give a knowledge of the sources from which a grocer's merchandise comes. It will also give him some information about the processes of producing the merchandise he sells. This can be used in advertisements and in sales talks in order to convince the customer as to the quality of the product and the method of using it. While it is not essential to have a knowledge of commercial geography, it is helpful. Business education, therefore, is valuable and should be obtained by all who plan to become grocers.

High-school students have the best opportunity to secure the education outlined above before they enter the business world. Those who are already at work and who were not able to attend a high school, however, may study these subjects during their spare time and in the evening and prepare for advancement in this way. The night classes conducted by the high schools, the part-time vocational schools, and the extension

divisions of the universities offer courses which will be helpful to all. Those in the business may thus prepare for advancement, and those not in this field of work may prepare for entrance with the assistance of the schools.

Readings

"The Economics of Retailing," Paul H. Nystrom, Chap. II, pp. 12–30.
"The Chain Store Manager," published in Los Angeles, Calif., Vol I, No. 8, pp. 42–43; Vol. I, No. 10, pp. 20–22.
"Vocational Education for Those Engaged in the Grocery Business," *Federal Board for Vocational Education, Bull.* 107, Commercial Series No. 5, (for teachers and counselors).
"Work of Juniors in Retail Grocery Stores," Bull. 9, Part-time Education Series, No. 11, Division of Vocational Education, University of California.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Why is it true that retail business is necessary in modern life?

2. Name the different types of grocery stores. Tell how each type is operated.

3. Prepare a chart showing the promotional steps in each kind of grocery and enumerate the duties connected with each position.

4. Trace in chart form the hands through which any one of the following articles passes before it reaches us:

a. Bread
b. Milk
c. Sardines
d. Apples
e. Bananas
f. Canned peas
g. Sugar
h. Oranges
i. Figs
j. Coffee
k. Cheese
l. Soap

CHAPTER VII

THE RETAIL MEAT DEALER

Fig. 1.

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THE RETAIL MEAT DEALER

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RETAIL MEAT BUSINESS

Meat has been one of the important foods of mankind for many thousands of years. Ages ago, when our ancestors wandered from place to place in tribes, each family secured its own supply of meat by killing wild animals. Later on, when some of the animals became tame or domesticated and people owned flocks and herds, they used these animals in part as a means of obtaining food for themselves. When cities began to grow and became so large that their inhabitants were forced to live in houses that were close together, it was a difficult matter for each family to own cattle which could be used for meat. The division of labor among the inhabitants also made it impossible for every one to know how to prepare a steer, or a sheep, or a hog in order to get meat for the family meals. As a result, the occupation of the butcher developed. The men who went into this trade slaughtered the cattle, skinned and cut them up, and then spent the remainder of their time in selling the meat to the persons who wished to purchase it. The work of the butcher has changed to a very great extent since those early days, and he is now a meat cutter or a meat dealer instead of a butcher.

Our own country was discovered long after the people of Europe had developed large cities and the various forms of work that go with this development. The Pilgrims and others of the early settlers had to start all over

again in a new land where there were none of the facilities of civilization. For that reason each family was compelled to supply itself with meat by hunting the wild birds and animals and by fishing. When the forests were cleared away and farming began, domesticated animals were brought over and were used for food as well as for other purposes. As the cities and towns grew, the butcher again came into prominence as the provider of meat for those people who were unable to supply themselves. In the country districts and on the frontier, however, the settlers had to depend upon their own resources for food. The growth of the cities led to the establishment of a cattle-raising industry which shipped live cattle to the more thickly populated sections.

The butcher of the old days as a rule bought cattle as he required them from the local gathering place where stock raisers and farmers assembled with the steers, the sheep, and the hogs that they wanted to sell. Sometimes a farmer would bring an animal which he wished to sell, to his place of business. Then he drove his purchases to his shop where they were slaughtered, skinned, cleaned, and cut up into steaks, chops, roasts, and other cuts of meat. The oldtime butcher made his own sausage and smoked meats, and for this work he did not have the conveniences that are available to the modern meat dealer.

The conditions changed for the better when the preparation of meat became an established business about 1820. When this came about, slaughtering was done in central places, and the meat was shipped to the vicinity immediately around them. At first this was a difficult problem because no method of keeping the product in good condition had been devised, but the invention of the refrigerator car and the development of new types of this car made it easy to ship fresh meat and caused the

slaughtering industry to grow rapidly. As a result of this growth, it became unnecessary for the butcher to slaughter his own cattle. The meat dealer of today is able to buy fresh meat from the packing house in as large quantities as he desires, as well as the smoked and cured meats which he sells. Instead of being primarily a butcher, therefore, he has become a salesman of meat and related products. He is able to pay more attention to his shop now, and so we find that sanitary conditions are better than in the past. The invention of better refrigeration systems has enabled him to keep in better condition the articles he sells; and the use of tile and other materials has made his place of business cleaner and more attractive than ever before. The retail meat business has a long and honorable past. It is just as important today as it ever has been; and it is desirable, therefore, that we should know more about the work of the people engaged in it.

TYPES OF RETAIL MEAT SHOPS

Not all of the meat markets are alike. Several different kinds may be found in any city. The meat market that is most common is the one that is known as the independent retail meat shop which sells only fresh and cured meat, poultry, eggs, butter, and similar products; and it is further divided into the one-man, two-man, or three-man stores, and those that are larger. There are also in existence chain-store meat markets which consist of a number of establishments operated by one concern, as well as combinations of grocery stores and meat shops, and meat sections in the food departments of department stores. The independent shops and the combination stores may also be classified according to the service they render. Thus, we find that there are cash-and-carry stores, cash-and-delivery establishments, mar-

kets that do not deliver but sell on credit, and shops that deliver and also carry charge accounts. The chain-store markets sell on a cash-and-carry basis only; that is, no credit is allowed and no deliveries are made. While there are such different types of meat markets, the work carried on in each does not differ in very many respects from the work performed in any of the others. The size of the shop determines to a great extent the variety of duties which each worker is required to handle.

THE WORK IN A RETAIL MEAT MARKET

The largest number of retail meat markets are the two- and three-man establishments. In these are found the proprietor, a meat cutter who acts as his assistant, and a helper who cleans up, assists in waiting on customers, and delivers whenever it is necessary. The work in establishments of this size will be discussed first. Then the other markets will be studied to see how they differ from this average establishment.

The duties of the workers in the average neighborhood meat shop are about as follows. In the morning the *helper* or *delivery man* gets the truck ready for the day's work. During the day he delivers to the homes of the customers, he assists in filling the icebox with ice when there is no mechanical means of refrigeration, and sometimes he waits on trade and fills the customers' wants as far as he possibly can. At the close of the day's work he helps to put away the meat which must be kept in the ice box. Then he helps to clean up the place by sweeping the floor, scraping the meat blocks, washing the counters and display cases, and by performing other necessary jobs in getting ready to close.

The experienced workers in a meat market are sometimes called *meat cutters*, and the assistant to the proprietor is known as the *head meat cutter* or first man. He is

the employee who waits on trade, cuts the meat and lays it out on the counter for inspection, takes care of the tools and the equipment, prepares the window displays, and keeps the shelves filled. In the absence of the owner, he buys the articles that are needed, and takes charge of the store in general. If the market

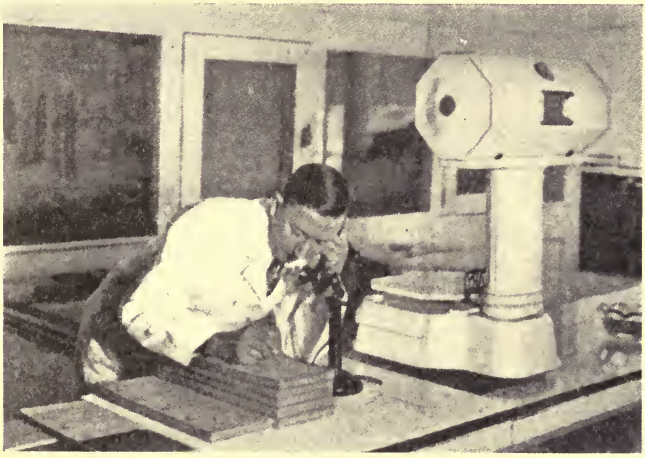

FIG. 2.—One of the duties of a meat cutter in some markets is to take orders over the telephone. The above view shows how it is done in some places.

employs other workers (meat cutters) in addition to himself, he supervises their activities and assists in training the beginners. The people who work under him have many duties that are similar to his. They sell to the customers; in some places they cut and grind the meat before the rush hours of the day come on; they cut the bacon and prepare it in convenient-sized packages; and they assist in keeping the store and the counters clean.

Most of the meat markets do not cut much meat before the customers come in, except the chain stores and those that sell on a cash-and-carry basis. In detail, the

duties of the workers are about as follows: Some days they may be required to divide a carcass of beef into the various wholesale and retail cuts; prepare extra roasts and different kinds of steak cuts; cut up, bone, and roll beef rib roasts; and trim bones for chopped meat. In preparing a hog for sale, it is necessary to cut it up into hams, bacon, loin, roasts, steaks, and chops; and after this is done the workers are required to pickle the pork and smoke the hams and the bacon. The meat cutters must be able to skin calves and divide them into veal chops, steaks and roasts, and such special calf products as liver, hearts, kidneys, and so forth. The same process must be gone through in preparing mutton and lamb for retail sale, and the meat-market worker must be thoroughly acquainted with the anatomy of each of these animals in order to divide them into the proper cuts and to the best advantage. The cleaning and drawing of fowl is one of the duties which must be performed in a meat market, but the beginner is usually the one who is given this job. However, when there is a big demand for this kind of meat, the other workers help to prepare the chickens, the ducks, the geese, and the turkeys. These duties are performed before eight o'clock in the morning and between the hours of twelve and three in the afternoon, which are usually the most quiet of the day.

In the small and in the average-sized market the *owner* is called upon to do a great share of the work. He opens the shop in the morning and is usually the last to leave the store in the evening. He sells to the customers whenever he has the time, but his most important work is that of buying the merchandise. This means that he must take trips to the branch packing plants or to the wholesale houses in order that he may personally select the fresh meat. He may also buy meats and other necessary articles from salesmen who come to the shop. In manag-

ing the business, the owner is required to keep accurate accounts, to hire his help, to supervise and train the workers, and to provide the proper equipment for his place of business.

Some combination grocery stores and meat markets hire workers to sell the grocery products. In such places the meat cutter is not required to do anything but his own line of work. However, in the small shops which handle a combination of food products the meat cutter also sells the groceries. Many markets sell vegetables, groceries, and similar things in order to attract customers; but they consider the sale of meats of all kinds as their main business. Therefore, they are really meat shops; and the workers must become familiar with that line of work before they begin to handle groceries.

The work in the meat sections of the department-store grocery is the same as that in the average meat market. The meat cutter is required to cut and grind the meats for the customers. He also arranges the products in attractive displays and prepares the various cuts so that the buyer will be able to secure them without much delay. The work of keeping his section neat and presentable is another of the duties of the department-store meat cutter.

A chain-store organization is one that operates a number of establishments which sell the same kind of articles. Usually a market of this kind is larger than the average and it is located, as a rule, in a business section. Each one of the stores in the chain is operated by a manager who is given orders by the main office. The buying for all the stores is done by the central office which also sets the prices, plans the sales events, and keeps the accounts. In some of these stores expert meat cutters are employed to cut the meat so that it will be ready for sale purposes, while other men are used as clerks to sell the products and

to wrap them for the customers. These stores have provided for a division of labor in order that each man may become efficient at one line of work. However, not all chain store organizations follow this plan. The others operate in the same way that the neighborhood stores do except that the central office regulates each store. We can find in these places, therefore, helpers, meat cutter, clerks, and managers. Since chain stores

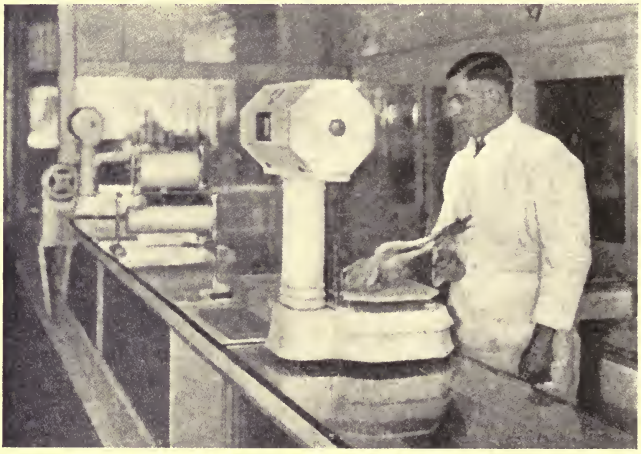

FIG. 3.—This meat cutter is weighing a chicken before sending it to a customer.

do not deliver as a rule, they do not employ delivery men.

Bookkeepers, cashiers, and other office workers are also employed in some of the meat markets; but the duties of these people will not be discussed here since the chapter on the office occupations takes them up in detail.

The meat-market worker is required to use a variety of hand tools in the course of the day's work. These are the meat saw, the boning and the trimming knives, the steak knives, the cleavers, and the sharpening steels. The machines that grind meats and those that slice bacon,

ham, and other similar products are sometimes operated by electricity, although many markets still use the hand-operated devices. The other equipment used in a meat shop consists of meat blocks, computing scales, platform scales, a cash register, display counters, and an ice box which is refrigerated by electricity or by ice brought in daily by the ice company. All of the tools and the equipment must be kept clean and in good working order by the meat cutters and the helpers.

It is evident from the above brief description that the work in a meat shop is varied and interesting. In the next section will be taken up the question of how a boy may enter this field of work.

HOW TO BECOME A MEAT MARKET WORKER

Education and Training Required.—This is one of the fields of work in which boys have the opportunity of becoming independent shop owners after a comparatively short time. In view of this fact, it is advisable to secure more than the required education before entering the occupation. Every beginner should have finished the eighth grade at least, and should be able to read, write, and figure well. In addition, he should have the ability to speak English correctly. With these educational qualifications a boy may enter a meat market as a learner, but his progress will be much faster if he has had some further education. A knowledge of elementary bookkeeping will be of special value to any one who is thinking of opening his own meat market at some future time; and a general high-school education is also a good foundation for future advancement. Many meat-market proprietors desire boys who have had more than the minimum amount of education. They feel that such young men are better trained and, therefore, are better prepared for future promotion.

Physical and Personal Qualifications.—As a rule, only men and boys are found working in the meat markets. While women are not barred, it has been found that the majority of them are not able to do the required work. This is due to the fact that strong people, who can lift fairly heavy objects, are needed in this business. Meat-market workers in general should be in the best of health and free from disease, because they handle food products which must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition. Workers in a meat shop are required to stand and walk about from place to place in the store in the course of the day. This means that they must be in good health and free from foot troubles. In order to be able to do efficient work, the meat cutters must also have the use of both hands.

To be successful in the meat business, it is necessary to have a winning personality. Such a person is one who is cheerful, courteous, and accommodating. He is able to make friends easily and to gain the good will of people by his actions towards them. Such an attitude is very necessary in this field of work because people like to buy at a place where they are well treated. In addition to the above, the meat-market worker should be neat in appearance, honest, and willing to work hard. A pleasant voice is essential for selling purposes, and it would be well if the boy who plans to enter the meat business would try to develop one. Intelligence and initiative are other qualities which make for success in this line of work as well as in any other.

Method of Entrance to the Occupation.—While it is possible to secure an apprenticeship in the meat-cutting industry by means of which a boy may learn the trade under the supervision of the employer, the parent and the state, it is not the usual manner of entrance. The usual way of entering the business is as a helper in the

shop or as a delivery boy. Then, after a period of work under the owner of the market, it is possible to become an experienced and skilled meat-market employee. The length of the learning period depends upon the individual. Some boys acquire the necessary skill and knowledge in three years, while others take five years to learn the ways and methods of the trade. Each owner teaches the beginners in his own way, and it depends upon him as to how much the helper will learn. Working boys who attend the part-time vocational school in their community may add to the knowledge gained in the shop by enrolling in the meat-marketing course. Here they are taught some technical details of the work which they do not get as a rule from their employers. This information will enable them to operate markets of their own some day.

Meat-market owners have employed boys under eighteen as helpers in their places of business. However, they are beginning to give the preference to young men who are eighteen years of age and over. There are several reasons for this change in the attitude of the meat dealers. In the first place, they feel that older boys, especially those that have gone to high school, have a better foundation upon which to build for the future. It is also felt that young men of eighteen and over are more settled in their choices of life jobs and, therefore, make better workers. Every boy who intends to become a meat dealer some day should remember these facts and guide himself accordingly. It is to his interest to obtain all the education possible, and to apply himself earnestly when he secures a job.

THE WORKING CONDITIONS

The working conditions in the retail meat markets have improved considerably in recent years. In the past,

the hours were very long, sometimes running 15 or more working hours a day. The wages were not so high as they are today, and the sanitary conditions also were not up to the standards which are maintained at present.

The meat markets of today usually open at seven o'clock in the morning and close at six o'clock in the evening during the first five days of the week, while on Saturday, some close at seven and others at nine o'clock in the evening. Some of the markets close for several hours during the afternoon on the days of the week when there is little business. This practice, however, is not very common.

The wages paid in this business compare quite favorably with those paid in other similar lines. It would be useless to give actual figures of wages here because they change so frequently, and also because not all shops pay alike. It is well to remember, however, that the pay received by able and experienced workers in the meat-market business is enough to allow them to live in comfort and decency.

The modern meat markets are clean and pleasing in appearance. The hygienic conditions are excellent, due to the fact that the health department inspects these places at regular intervals. Since it is not possible to heat the markets to any great extent, the work must be done in a comparatively cold temperature. The workers must provide themselves with warm clothing, therefore, in order to work in comfort. Carelessness in the handling of the sharp knives, cleavers, saws, slicing machines, and meat grinders may cause painful cuts. There are no outstanding dangers in this line of work, however, such as are found in some industrial establishments.

There is very little seasonable change in the meat business. The work is steady all year round even though there is a little falling off in the buying by customers

during the summer months. Usually the periods just before the holidays are very busy, and some shops hire additional temporary help to aid in handling the increased business. While there seems to be a sufficient supply of

FIG. 4.—The above view shows a helper in a meat market operating an electric grinding machine.

labor on hand, it is also true that a good meat cutter is always in demand and need never be out of work.

PROMOTIONAL POSSIBILITIES

The Promotional Steps.—Every boy who enters the retail meat business with the intention of making it his life work hopes some day to be the owner of a store or probably a group of stores. While there is no definite line of promotion which he must follow

before he can reach the top, it is best to gain as much practical experience as possible before opening a shop of one's own. In order to do this, it is necessary to start at the bottom as a *helper* and work up to the position of *meat cutter*. Then he may become *head meat cutter* or *first man* which, in a small shop, means that he is assistant to the owner and in a large shop or in a chain store he is *assistant manager*. The next step for some men is to the *ownership* of a meat market, while for others it is to the position of manager of a store and finally to the *managership* of a number of stores.

The Value of Education.—The meat dealer of today must be a good business man in order to be successful. While it is necessary to know how to prepare the various cuts of meat, it is still more important to be able to manage a business efficiently. A knowledge of bookkeeping, and the ability to figure the cost of articles purchased and the necessary selling price, as well as the ability to determine the profit or loss on each item sold, help in the operation of any business. In buying for the store, the meat dealer should be able to judge different grades of meat, and he should know what to order so as to meet the needs of the particular neighborhood. He should know something about the principles of salesmanship, window display, and commercial English in order to be able to sell more goods, to make his store more attractive, and to write clear, business-like letters. It is also necessary to have a thorough knowledge of arithmetic to be able to figure costs, selling prices, and profit and loss.

The items outlined above should be a part of the equipment of every meat dealer if he wishes to operate his business on a profitable basis. However, it is not possible to gain the necessary knowledge in the shop. Attend-

ance at a school where these subjects can be studied is, therefore, essential. Thus, the boy who is prepared before he enters the retail meat market has the advantage over the one who is not ready. The boy who has not mastered the required subjects must spend his spare time

FIG. 5.—This meat cutter is preparing a cut of meat for a customer.

in studying the fundamentals, while the other boy can go ahead and prepare himself for advancement by studying other problems. The successful meat dealers of today are the ones who have made an effort to learn more than the art of cutting meat. They believe that education is of value and have demonstrated their belief by attending night-school classes. In case it is not possible to attend the full-time day school, the required subjects can be

studied in the night classes conducted by the vocational school, or the trade school, the public high schools, and the extension divisions of the universities. In this way, it is possible to secure the proper educational training while working at the trade.

Every individual should remember also that he is a citizen of this country. Therefore, he is entitled to certain rights among which are the right of free speech, the right to take part in the affairs of government, and the right to hold office. We do not take a direct hand in the operation of our government because it is not practical, and so we elect people to represent us in the city council, the state legislature, and the national congress, as well as the officers who have charge of the various branches. Every right that we have has a duty to correspond to it, and the right to take part in the affairs of our government carries with it the duty of electing the officials. As good citizens we must vote at every election for the person whom we believe to be the best man for each office. In order to vote intelligently, we must know something about the different departments in the government and about the various offices to which we elect fellow citizens. This knowledge cannot very well be picked up at random. It is necessary to make a thorough study of American history and of civics to understand why our government was founded and the principles upon which it is based. The study of these subjects will familiarize us with the duties and the functions of the government divisions and of the officials in them. This knowledge will enable us to be more intelligent citizens. As future business men who will pay the taxes for the support of the government we ought to take an added interest in its affairs, and we should study the things that will enable us to be good citizens.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Tell in your own words why you think the retail meat dealer is important?

2. Why should a worker in a meat market be clean, neat in appearance, pleasant, and courteous? List some other qualities which a meat cutter should have.

3. Describe the possibilities for promotion in this field of work, and show what a person must do in order to succeed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEPARTMENT-STORE WORKERS

FIG. 1.—The man at the desk is a buyer who is examining merchandise which is being shown by a salesman for a hosiery concern. The buyer is preparing to purchase stock for his department.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEPARTMENT-STORE WORKERS

THE PLACE OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE IN MODERN LIFE

What Is a Department Store?—There are many kinds of stores that sell goods at retail, which means that they sell in small quantities directly to the consumer. The department store is included in this group, but it is different in many respects from the average retail store. While the small store sells only one line of commodities or a number of related lines, the department store aims to gather under one roof as many different lines of goods as possible, in order to be able to satisfy the needs of everybody. For example, there are stores which sell shoes only, while others specialize in the sale of millinery or clothing or groceries. We can think of any number of establishments which specialize in the sale of some one commodity. The department store, however, is divided into departments or separate stores each one of which specializes in the sale of certain articles. Thus, it is possible in such an establishment to buy everything one needs for the home, for one's personal use, for a trip out of town, and for many other purposes.

Other services are rendered to their customers by these large stores. They provide restrooms, restaurants, information bureaus, postal substations, garages, parking stations, delivery service, and other conveniences for the people who trade there. The department store has become an important institution in modern life because it supplements and rounds out the services rendered

by the specialty shops and other retail stores. The individual who desires to purchase only one kind of article may go to the specialty shop and obtain what he wants without any delay. But if he wishes to buy more than one kind of commodity at one time, he may shop at his convenience and in comfort in the department store. It is apparent, then, that both types of retail store serve to satisfy the wants of consumers.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT STORE

The Departmental Organization.—It has been stated above that a department store is composed of separate departments each one of which is considered as a specialty store. Thus, each department has its own selling and buying forces, and it is charged with its share of the cost of rent, light, heat, power, insurance, office management, delivery, and the numerous forms of service rendered. The general manager supervises the work of the entire store and determines the general policy of the establishment. This gives unity to the organization and promotes teamwork.

In addition to the unity caused by centralized control, the department store differs from the specialty shop in that all forms of service, such as credits and collections, marking goods, stockroom work, the adjustment bureau, delivery, and so forth, are handled by special departments for all of the merchandising or selling departments alike. The chart given below illustrates the organization of a typical department store.

Chart I shows how all the non-selling departments are concerned with the work of the sales departments. The sales-promotion department, the customer service, the accounting department, the credits and collections department, the merchandising service, the personnel, the building management, and the research departments

have as their principal purpose the aiding of the sales force to increase its sales.

The sales-promotion department handles all the advertising for the entire store; it helps to determine the sales policy and tries to stimulate sales by the use of effective displays. This department includes the advertising, the display, and the sign-card-writing divisions.

FIG. 2.—A saleslady is showing her wares to a customer.

Customer service is a term used to include the work of all the departments which render service to the customers in connection with their buying activities. The work of many departments is included in the service given to the store's customers. Cashiering and bundling, the handling and checking of parcels, the delivery work, the restroom, the information bureau, the stamp desk, and the adjustment bureau are some of the services which are included under the term *customer service.*

The accounting department handles all of the money that comes in or goes out of the store. It also prepares

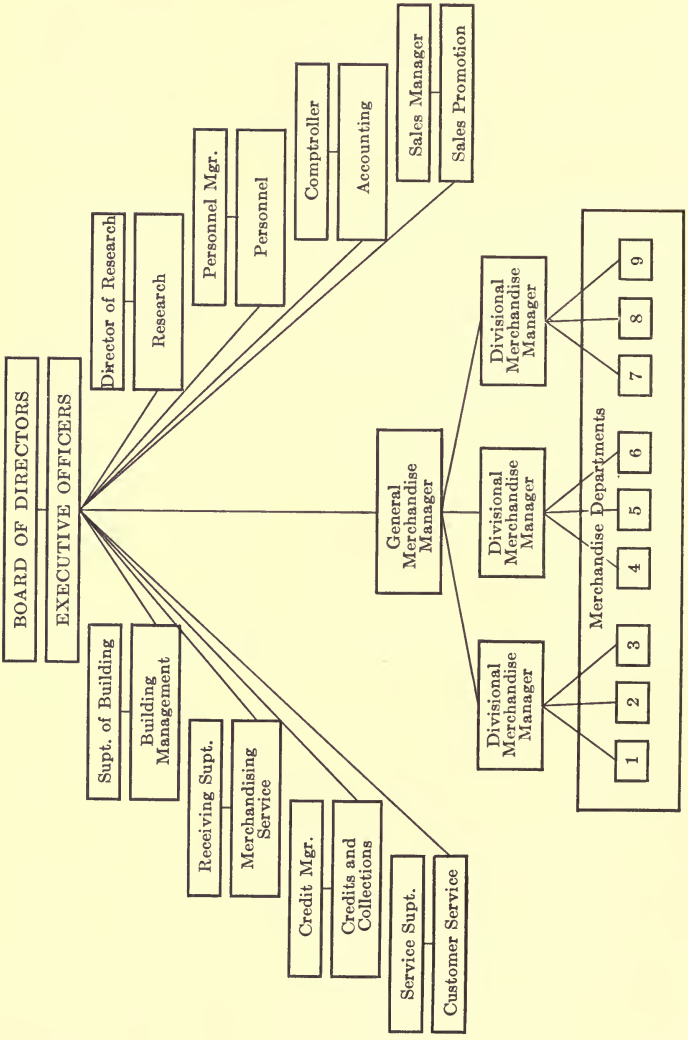

FIG. 3.—Organization of a department store.

the payroll, the purchase orders, and the departmental statistics; and it has charge of the general accounts, the Accounts Receivable, and the Accounts Payable. The auditing of all the accounts and the payment of all of the store's bills, taxes, insurance, rent, salaries, and so forth is handled in this office.

FIG. 4.—This group includes a cashier who is examining a sales-check, a bundler who is wrapping a parcel, and a saleslady who has sold some articles.

The credit department deals directly with the credit given to customers on charge accounts, and it handles all time-payment schemes. It keeps records of purchases made by all customers who have charge accounts, and it prepares monthly statements of these accounts which are sent to the purchasers. A record is kept in this department of the amounts paid by buyers on their accounts, in order to determine the credit limit of each customer. This record which tells exactly how an individual's account stands is kept in such a manner that it can be referred to quickly when requests are made by the

salespeople as to whether a customer is or is not entitled to credit. This record is called the *charge board.* The credit department also keeps track of delinquent accounts with the object of bringing collections up to date.

The merchandising service is similar to the customer service in that it includes the work of several departments. The purpose of this service is to aid the sales or merchandise departments in working more efficiently. The work of the receiving, the checking, and the marking departments is considered as service rendered to the sales departments. The stockrooms where merchandise is stored until it is needed by the various departments are an aid in the more efficient functioning of the store because they are a means of preventing overstocking due to the fact that an accurate check is kept of the amount and the kinds of goods on hand. The return of defective merchandise to the manufacturer may also be called a part of this service.

The personnel department is concerned with the efficiency and the welfare of the store's employees. The hiring of all the workers is part of the routine of this department. The training, the educational and the medical services, and the recreational activities are under the control of the personnel manager. The locker rooms, the employees' cafeteria, the restrooms, and other such activities are also under the jurisdiction of the welfare or personnel department.

The management of the building is usually in the care of one department. The duties of this department are many. It must see to the cleaning of the entire store and to the purchase of such equipment for the store as counters, fixtures of all kinds, supplies for cleaning purposes, wrapping paper, twine, and other equipment. In some stores, the purchasing of supplies is taken care of by a distinct purchasing department.

The research department works with all other departments, especially with the sales department, the purpose being to help them to solve their problems. It investigates materials that are to be sold, it studies selling methods, and it surveys market conditions. The information thus obtained is placed at the disposal of the various departments as an aid in increasing their efficiency.

The Types of Occupations.—Department stores employ workers for many different kinds of jobs. Due to the fact that they sell such a great variety of products and maintain such large buildings, they find it necessary to use the services of these different types of workers. A list of some employees other than salespeople will serve to show the varied activities of a department store. The following is a partial list of those employed in such an establishment:

Artists
Barbers
Bakers
Decorators:
  a Interior display
  b Window display
Porters
Watchmen
Elevator operators
Truck drivers
Packers
Opticians
Cabinet makers
Carpenters
Nurses
Messengers
Garage men
Laundry workers
Telephone operators
Electricians
Painters
Shoe-repair men
Office workers
Sign writers
Advertising men
Tailors
Rug repairers
Milliners

It can be seen from this list that department stores employ workers who are found in other industries as well. The work of these people will not be discussed in this chapter since it will be fully treated elsewhere.

The sales staff which comprises about 50 per cent of the entire working force of any department store also requires people of different types of ability, temperament,

and training. Some of these stores have as many as 100 or more departments, each one of which sells a different line of goods. Thus, the glove department requires salespeople who have different qualifications from those employed in the sale of stoves. The sale of musical instruments would no doubt be undertaken with more enthusiasm by one who is interested in music than by one who is better fitted to sell shoes. The excellent furniture salesman might not be able to sell jewelry. It is evident, therefore, that each sales department in a store is in need of people who are peculiarly fitted for the work of selling its commodities. Since this is true, there seems to be an opportunity for every one who seeks employment in a department store.

The work of the sales-division employees, the cashiers, the sales-promotion staff, the floormen, the adjustment-bureau staff, and the marking and stockroom workers will be discussed in this chapter. These occupations are found mainly in department stores, while the others mentioned above will be discussed elsewhere.

THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT-STORE EMPLOYEES

The Sales Division.—The purpose of the department store is to sell goods, and its existence depends upon its ability to make sales that are satisfactory to the customers. The people who sell its goods make up the sales force. We can see how important this group is when we realize that it forms the connecting link between the department store and its customers. The impressions created and the services rendered by the merchandise or sales staff are the main factors which determine whether the store will continue to get the customer's trade. The highest type of person is required for the work of selling because it is so necessary to make a pleasing and lasting impression on the

people who patronize the store. It is evident, therefore, that salesmanship is dignified work which ought to be considered seriously by every one who has the ability to meet people and who can adapt himself to the ideas of different types of people. Saleswork is also interesting because it includes a great variety of duties in the

FIG. 5.—A restroom for female employees in one of the department stores.

course of the day, and because it brings one in contact with many and varied situations.

The merchandise staff is composed of salespersons, individuals who are called heads of stock, assistant department managers, department managers, and merchandise managers. The assistants and the department managers perform both buying and managing functions. That is why they are sometimes called buyers.

The Salesperson.—The salesperson begins the day by caring for the stock. This means that she removes the covers and dusts the stock as soon as she comes to

her place of work. She must assist in arranging displays and must keep her section of the department and stock in clean and orderly condition. Whenever the stock begins to run low, it is her duty to notify the head of stock who will then see that the goods are replenished. The routine selling duties include writing out sales slips, sending the slip together with the money and the

FIG. 6.—A marking-room clerk at work.

merchandise to the cashier and bundler, if a sale is made, and returning the change and the merchandise to the customer if the goods are carried away by the buyer. She is also expected to gain a knowledge of all the stock in the department and to make a study of the origin, the manufacture, the value and the style of the merchandise she is selling. Her chief duty, of course, is to sell the articles found in her department. This work occupies most of her day.

The Head of Stock.—The head of stock in most department stores supervises the care and the appear-

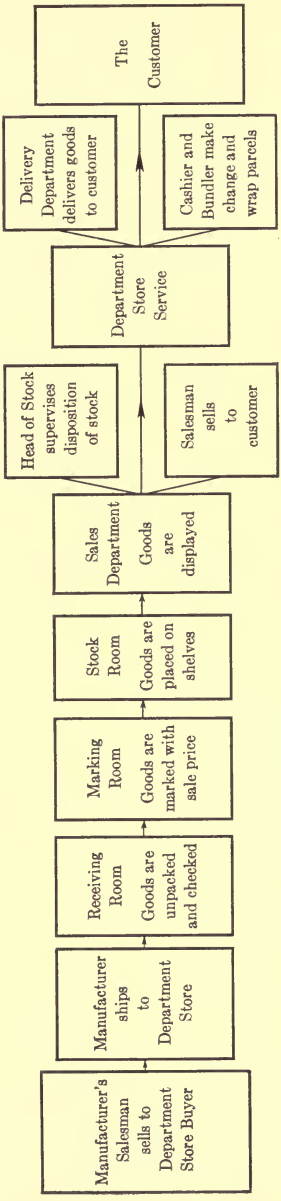
Manufacturer's Salesman sells to Department Store Buyer
Manufacturer ships to Department Store
Receiving Room Goods are unpacked and checked
Marking Room Goods are marked with sale price
Stock Room Goods are placed on shelves
Sales Department Goods are displayed
Head of Stock supervises disposition of stock
Salesman sells to customer
Department Store Service
Delivery Department delivers goods to customer
Cashier and Bundler make change and wrap parcels
The Customer

FIG. 7.—Progress of merchandise from the manufacture to the customer.

ance of stock in her department. She checks up on the amount of merchandise on hand and informs the buyer when it begins to run low. When new merchandise comes into the receiving department, she checks it and also puts a price on it, and the markers later copy it on the price tags. She assists in the training and the supervision of the work of the new employees, and at times she advises the buyer what to purchase. Her duties include such work as the preparation of advertising copy, the selection of displays for windows, the preparation and the disposition of merchandise for sales, and the authorization of returns and adjustments. The head of stock also collects the daily sales reports, supervises the work of extra help brought in for special purposes, and sells in her spare time.

The Assistant Department Manager (Assistant Buyer). The department store is really a number of separate stores occupying a common building and working under the same management. Each store or department is under the control of a manager or buyer who has under him an assistant manager or an assistant buyer. In the past, the heads of the departments were called *buyers*, and their chief function was to buy the material sold in their departments. Many stores now call them *department managers* because the managing function is considered as important as the buying function.

The assistant department manager is more directly in touch with the management of the department than any other official. One of his most important duties is to advise and assist the department manager in the selection and the purchase of goods. Sometimes he is allowed to buy articles on his own initiative, but most of his time is taken up with management duties. He is responsible for the proper marking and display of all merchandise in his department; he must instruct the salespeople and

inform them about the price of different articles as well as their best selling points; and if there is a workroom in connection with his department, he usually supervises its activities. The assistant department manager sometimes takes part in the selling activities and at all times tries to relieve the department manager of as much detail as possible.

The Department Manager (Buyer).—The department manager in some stores is called the *buyer*. He is the man who is an expert in some particular line of merchandise, and he is the one who must be able to manage his department so that it will show a profit at the end of the year. He must study market conditions, he must know the trend of the styles, and he must keep in touch with the best sources from which to buy. His duties include the regular purchasing of merchandise, the inspection of incoming merchandise, and the designation of retail prices. The buyer must know raw materials and manufacturing processes in so far as they affect his purchases of goods. The preparation of advertising copy, the planning of and the preparation for special sales events, the training of his assistants for more responsible positions, and the general management of the department come under his supervision.

The Divisional Merchandise Manager.—The divisional merchandise manager supervises the work of several department managers. He oversees and authorizes all large purchases, he controls purchases by watching stock conditions and the merchandise figures, and he gives the department managers the authority to make special purchases at various times. The merchandise manager supervises the sales service, and with the buyers makes plans for special sales events over which he has general charge. He designates the average percentage of gross profit that each department should

make, he advises the buyers in regard to the number of people to employ in their departments, and he trains department managers for higher positions. He is responsible to the heads of the firm only, and in turn he interprets the policy of the firm to his subordinates.

The Floor Manager.—The floor manager is not a member of the sales staff, but his work is closely related to the work of the salespeople. His chief duty is to see that buying is made convenient and pleasant for the customers. He has charge of the employees in his section of the floor, which means that he assists in the instruction of new workers and sees that the rules and systems of the store are followed by them. The extra employees are also under his control; he distributes them among the different departments; and when necessary, he shifts salespeople from one department to another so that customers may be waited upon promptly. The lunch and shopping hours are regulated by the floor manager, permission to leave the department is granted by him, and he arranges for reliefs and special privileges. The conditions of the departments in regard to cleanliness and neatness must be supervised by him. He O.K.'s charges and bank checks up to a certain amount; he usually handles exchanges of goods, credits, and returns of merchandise; and he adjusts claims whenever it is possible to do so. The floor manager is responsible for the discipline of the employees in his section of the store, and he must report any difficulty or trouble that may occur. He is really the direct representative of the store superintendent, in which capacity he enables the management to direct the work and to control the efficiency of the selling force.

The Cashier and Bundler.—One of the beginning jobs in the department store is that of cashier and bundler. In some stores, the beginner acts first as a

bundler and then as a cashier, while in others the duties of the two jobs are combined, except in departments where bulky goods are sold. In that case an extra person is employed to do the wrapping. The routine work of this occupation includes inspection of the mer-

FIG. 8.—An elevator operator at her post.

chandise to see that it corresponds in price, size, and quality with the information given on the salescheck. The bundler or wrapper is taught how to wrap different articles so that they will be adequately protected; and at the same time she sees to it that no waste results from poor wrapping.

The cashier begins her daily work by securing a certain amount of money as change from the vault. She counts this to see that she has obtained the correct amount and then goes to her station. Her job is to receive money from the salespeople, to make the right change, and to return it with the merchandise to the proper person. When she receives the money and the merchandise, she checks the amount with the sum recorded on the sales-check, and she also checks the number of pieces of merchandise with the number stated on the sales slip. If there are any errors, she calls them to the attention of the salesperson. After she makes the change, she stamps the salescheck, tears off part of it and files it, and returns the change together with the remainder of the slip to the salesman. The cashier also telephones to the credit department to obtain the authority to charge goods, and she makes note of such sales other than cash as C. O. D.'s and will calls. At the end of the day she balances her cash, puts aside a sum for the next day's business which is equal to that which she received in the morning, and then she takes the money to the vault for safekeeping.

The Adjustment-bureau Clerks.—The adjustment bureau settles claims and complaints which the floor managers or the department managers are not able to adjust. This force is composed of the chief adjuster and of persons called *adjustment clerks*. They try to settle complaints after others have failed to do so. When a customer feels that he is not satisfied with a purchase, the clerks in the adjustment bureau try to make a settlement which will be just to the store as well as to the purchaser. The chief adjuster directs the work of the bureau and handles those cases which involve large sums of money or which others have not been able to settle.

The Sales-promotion or Publicity Staff.—The sales-promotion or the publicity department is composed of

two divisions—the decorating department and the advertising department. Each department does its part in trying to increase the sale of merchandise upon which the life of the store depends.

The decorating department has charge of the decoration of the interior of the store and the display windows. The workers in this department are *window decorators*, *interior decorators*, and helpers who understudy the work of the experienced men. The window decorators, who are sometimes known as *window trimmers*, arrange displays of merchandise in the show windows in such a manner that the attention of the people passing them will be attracted. The object of all window displays is, of course, to stimulate sales. The work of the interior decorators is that of arranging the inside of the store so that it will present a pleasing effect to the customers. The interior decorators, for example, make all colors harmonize in the decorative scheme, and they see that all displays in the store are arranged artistically. The *sign* and *card writers*, who are also members of the publicity staff, prepare all signs and display cards used in the store as well as in the windows.

The workers in the advertising department are the proofreaders, copy writers, artists, layout men, the assistant advertising manager, and the advertising manager. Their work is similar to that of the people engaged in other types of advertising agencies, and it will be discussed fully in another chapter where these occupations will be treated in detail. The advertising department, however, is important in the organization of a department store since it provides for the proper kind of publicity which is so necessary to the efficient functioning of such an establishment.

The Marker.—The marker holds what is considered to be a beginning job in the department store. This is a

job which is held as a rule by young persons for a time until they are promoted to more important and more responsible positions. All merchandise handled by a store is marked in various ways with the selling price and other information for the benefit of the customers and the

FIG. 9.—A floor manager adjusting a claim.

salespeople. This information is put on various kinds of tags and stickers which are later attached to the merchandise, or it is marked on the boxes and other types of containers. The marking or writing is done by machine or by hand.

The Stock Boy or Girl.—Stockwork is divided into two parts in some of the department stores. One part of the work consists in taking care of the stock in the sales department. It is necessary to have the departments

looking neat and orderly at all times, in order to present a good appearance and also to enable the salespeople to find easily and quickly the merchandise that is called for. In order to obtain neatness and orderliness, the stock boy or girl returns to its proper place the merchandise which has not been sold, but which has been shown to the customer.

Every department store has a stockroom where surplus merchandise is kept. Stock boys or girls are employed here to put away this extra merchandise in bins or on shelves after it has been marked in the marking room. They also keep the departments supplied with goods when they call for more to replace what has been sold. A record is kept of the articles taken from or received in the stockroom.

ENTRANCE TO DEPARTMENT-STORE OCCUPATIONS

Education and Previous Training Needed.—No special educational qualifications are required of department-store workers. By the above statement is meant that no special technical education is needed, such as is demanded of metal-trades workers, stenographers, bookkeepers, and so forth. In the past, it was commonly thought that an eighth-grade education was sufficient preparation for a department store career. Today, however, most of these establishments prefer to employ people with at least some high-school education, especially for the positions in the sales departments. College training is beginning to be required by some stores, especially for those positions which lead to executive responsibility. It is true that people who have only a common-school education are still hired for work in department stores, but it is equally true that the high-school people are given the preference. It is advisable, therefore, to com-

plete as much of the high-school education as is possible before attempting to secure work in a department store. Emphasis should be placed on English, arithmetic, commercial geography, and any special studies which may be offered at high school, such as retail salesmanship, and the like.

Training in actual department-store work can only be obtained by securing employment in that kind of an establishment. It would be well to secure work during the summer vacation months and before the Christmas holidays in one of the stores of the city. The practical training received through such employment would be of great value later on when one's education has been completed and a permanent position is sought. It will acquaint one with the rules and regulations, the store policy, the officials of the store, and the working procedure. The knowledge thus obtained will, no doubt, gain one the preference when vacancies occur in the permanent force.

Age of Entrance.—The age at which entrance to the various department-store occupations can be gained differs with the type of work desired. However, no one under the age of sixteen is employed. It is usually the bundlers, the cashiers, and the messengers who are hired at the minimum age of sixteen. For the other occupations, these stores prefer to employ people who are eighteen years old or more. Since this is the case, the best thing to do is to continue one's education until a high-school course is completed.

Physical and Personal Qualities Desired.—Good health is just as essential to the department-store worker as it is to the person in any other field of work. No other definite physical qualities are demanded of him, except that for saleswork he is required to have a pleasing appearance, and he should be the possessor of an agree-

able voice. Personal neatness and cleanliness are also asked of employees in stores of this kind.

The following personal qualities characterize a good department-store salesperson:

a. Mental alertness
b. Enthusiasm
c. Ability of expression
d. Tact
e. Honesty
f. Faithfulness
g. Initiative
h. Cheerfulness

The other department-store workers must possess the special abilities necessary for their particular jobs. The *decorators* should be able to harmonize colors and to group merchandise effectively. In other words, they should have artistic sense. The *cashiers* should be honest, dependable, observant, ambitious, and nimble with their fingers. The *adjustment-bureau workers* should be tactful, cheerful, and highly intelligent. The *markers* and the *stockroom boys* and *girls*, who are the beginners in department-store work, should be willing workers, honest, trustworthy, observant, and able to carry out orders intelligently.

WORKING CONDITIONS IN DEPARTMENT STORES

Department-store employees work eight hours every day in the week except Sunday. Due to the fact that so many people have time to shop on Saturday only, all of these places remain open in the afternoon of that day, except during the months of July and August when some stores in the larger cities close. This service enables people to fulfill wants which otherwise would probably have to remain unsatisfied. Most of the stores open between eight-thirty and nine o'clock in the morning, and they allow an hour each day for luncheon purposes.

There is almost no limit to what a department store employee may earn. The minimum wage for the lowest positions nowadays is about twelve dollars per week. Most workers do not remain at that stage very long, however, because they can increase the amount of their pay checks by earning bonuses and commissions which are given them for efficient work. The higher positions in a department store pay very well; some of the department managers receive salaries ranging from $5,000 to $10,000 per year, the pay of the merchandise managers and the other executives being correspondingly greater. Most of the workers earn enough to enable them to live in moderate comfort and to enjoy some of the luxuries of life. The work is steady all year round. The rush periods which occur before Christmas and before Easter are handled by the addition of temporary employees at those times.

The work of the department-store employees is usually performed in surroundings which are clean, well lighted, and well ventilated. Lockers are provided for the storage of the clothes of the workers, and restrooms have been established for them where they may go during their leisure time. In order that they may obtain good, wholesome food at cost, some stores operate cafeterias for their employees. Mutual benefit associations and educational departments are fostered by some establishments for the purpose of aiding the people working there to improve themselves and their conditions. It is evident therefore, that this type of retail store offers working conditions which tend to make its employees contented and efficient.

PROMOTIONAL POSSIBILITIES

The Promotional Steps.—A department store offers more opportunities for promotion than are offered by

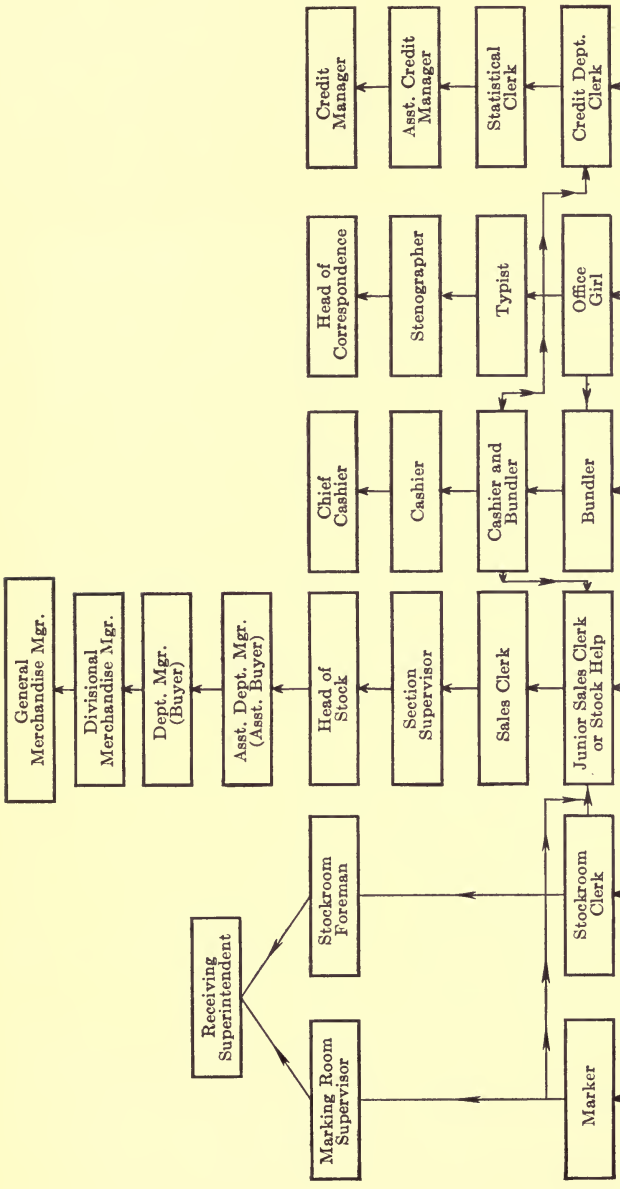

FIG. 10.—Promotional chart for some department store occupations.

most other kinds of business establishments. This is due to the fact that it is organized as a group of independent stores. Each department or independent store has a staff of executives who are drawn from the salespeople in the department itself. Since there are at least three executives in each department, it can be seen that the

FIG. 11.—Stockroom employees at work.

promotional possibilities are great. Above the departmental managers, however, there are division merchandise managers and a general merchandise manager whose positions are open to those employees who have the necessary ability, loyalty, enthusiasm, and knowledge. These positions are open mainly to salespeople, but there are opportunities for the other workers as well.

The cashier may become chief cashier, or she may transfer either to the general office or to the credit office where the chances for promotion are equally as great. The marker may become supervisor of the marking room; the stockroom clerk may be promoted to the position of fore-

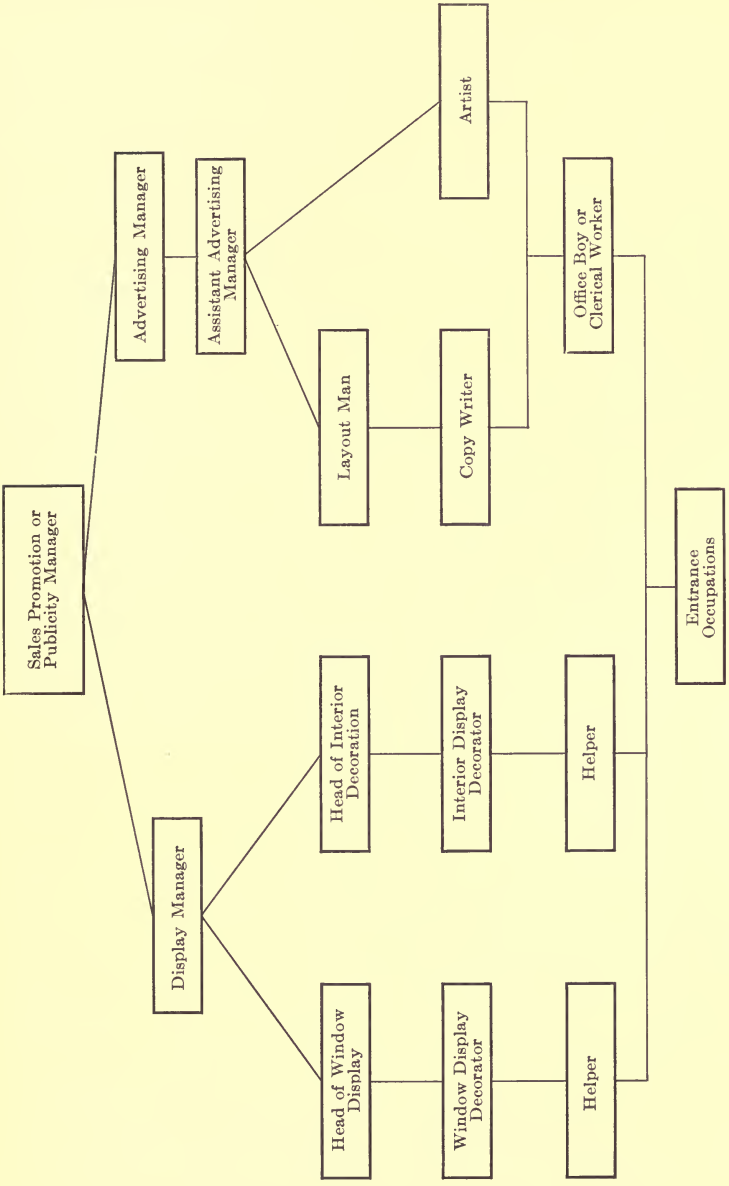

FIG. 12.—Promotional chart for sales promotion or publicity department.

man of that division; the delivery-truck driver, the packer, and the receiving-room clerk all have the opportunity to rise to the positions of warehouse foreman, receiving superintendent, or delivery superintendent. In some stores the floor manager may assume charge of the work of all the other floor managers, and eventually he may become store superintendent. The chief adjuster is

FIG. 13.—A delivery-wagon driver is preparing to make his daily rounds.

usually drawn from the ranks of the adjustment-bureau clerks. In the sales-promotion or publicity department there are two distinct lines of promotion. One line leads to the position of display manager and another to the position of advertising manager. The accompanying chart shows graphically what positions must be filled before one can become manager of the publicity department. The department store offers opportunities in other fields of work also. In the beginning of this chapter a list of workers, other than salespeople, who are

employed in department stores was given. These people also have promotional possibilities; but since their work is not limited to such stores only it has not been discussed in this chapter. We have seen that the workers in our department stores are in as good a position to advance as are the workers in any other form of industry. The charts show how some of them may progress.

The Value of Education in Securing Promotion.—Promotion or advancement to more responsible and better paid positions is something we all desire to secure. Three factors are mainly responsible for the success a person may have in gaining this desired end. These factors are hard work, practical experience, and a broad, general education; but education is not the least of these. Practical experience can be gained easily after the necessary education has been completed, but education is not so easily obtained while one is engaged in actual work in a store. It is better, therefore, to complete the required schooling before going out into the business world.

Why is it possible for an educated person to gain promotion rapidly? It is due to the fact that such an individual has been trained to think, to analyze problems, and to put into use the store of information gained while at an institution of learning. The knowledge acquired in the years at school can be used to interpret the problems that arise and to supplement the experience gained by actually working on the job. Thus, the department manager, the merchandise manager, or any other official should know something about business conditions; he should be able to make a study of the industries which are most important in his community; he should know how to study market conditions; he should be able to analyze the needs and demands of the customers of the store; and he should know how to find the best sources of supply of materials. While he may

be able to do all of the things mentioned above without education in economics, commercial geography, and other commercial subjects, it is certain that it will take a longer time for him to acquire the necessary knowledge which he could have obtained in school before entering upon department-store work. It simply means that educational preparation for work saves one years of time in obtaining such knowledge. College or high-school graduates are promoted faster in proportion to the length of time worked than are any other persons, because they have had the preparation in the fundamentals; and, therefore, they can devote all of their time and their energy to the practical problems of the business.

There are other things which can be gained from a completed education which are of value to the person seeking advancement. A better command of the English language is essential to all types of department-store workers, especially the salespeople. The ability to speak well and correctly adds greatly to the efficiency of those who are employed in saleswork. A general knowledge of affairs and conditions can also be secured by completing a high-school or college education. The possession of such knowledge enables the individual employee to become a better department-store worker, because the interests of this type of industry are so varied that people of broad training are required to understand them all. It is only such individuals who are chosen to take charge of the various branches of the work. Department stores are raising the requirements for entrance to those occupations which are the stepping stones to higher positions, and the time is drawing near when only high-school graduates or those who have the equivalent of a high-school education will be chosen for such work. Some stores are already selecting college graduates with

the view to training them for the responsible executive positions.

The boys and the girls who are not able to continue attendance at full-time schools need not become discouraged by the above statement. If they are ambi-

FIG. 14.—A saleslady is arranging a display of the goods in her department.

tious, there are ways in which they can gain the required education. They should complete a few years of high-school work, and then they will be in a position to continue with the courses of study offered by the extension divisions of the universities and the part-time vocational or trade school. In order to fit themselves for promotion

in the sales department, they should study commercial geography, retail salesmanship, English, arithmetic, and any other special subjects which may have a bearing on the work. Advancement to the higher office positions can be secured through a study of typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping, office practice, and English. The employees in the display, advertising, delivery, and other departments should make a special study of subjects connected with their lines of work after they have completed their general education.

In conclusion, it may be said again that the department-store field is one in which there is every opportunity for advancement for the person who is a hard worker, who has a pleasing personality, who is willing to secure the necessary education, and who has a liking for the business.

Readings

"Opportunities and Requirements in Local Occupations," Part 1, pp. 6–21, published by the Vocational Bureau, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Mich.

"Elements of Retail Salesmanship," P. W. Ivey.

"Retail Selling," J. W. Fisk.

"Retail Selling," *Federal Board for Vocational Education Bull.* 22, Commercial Education Series No. 1.

"The Human Side of Retail Selling," Ruth Leigh.

"Department Store Service," *Bull.* 11, Indianapolis Vocational Information Series, issued by the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and Indiana University.

"Vocational Education Survey of Minneapolis, Minn.," *Bull.* U. S. *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 199, Chap. XVII, p. 391.

Special Problems for Study and Discussion

1. Enumerate the services rendered by a department store? How does such a store differ from a specialty shop? State fully all points of difference.

2. List the qualities desired in a good salesman, a cashier, a window-display decorator, an adjustment-bureau clerk, and a credit-department clerk. Also make a list of the qualities you believe you possess

which would make you a good department-store worker. Compare the lists to determine for which position you are best fitted.

3. Make an appointment for a visit to one of the local department stores. During the visit obtain the following information:

a. Where does the merchandise enter the store?

b. Who receives it? What is done with it by the receiver?

c. What departments or individuals handle it before it reaches the customer?

d. What methods of delivery are used by the store? After the information has been obtained, prepare a chart tracing the path of a piece of merchandise through a department store to the customer.

4. What kind of work in a department store do you like best? Write a brief statement giving your reasons.

5. What are some of the departments in a department store? Describe the kind of merchandise sold in some one department.

WITHDRAWN

Date Due

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10 3x	5/20		
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11/12 32			
3/27/14			
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